

MONTREAL IN EVOLUTION

Historical Account of the Development
of Montreal's Architecture and Environment

by

JEAN-CLAUDE MARSAN, B.A., B.Arch., M.Sc.

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University of Edinburgh

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I hereby declare that this is my own work
and that this thesis has been entirely
composed by me

Jean-Claude Marsan, B.A., B.Arch., M.Sc.

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ABSTRACT

Montreal in Evolution is an historical account of the development of Montreal's architecture and environment, from the time of the first visits of the Sieur de Champlain at Place Royale to today's metropolis. It is concerned with both popular and academic architecture, with the organic growth of the urban settlement as well as with the planned developments.

However, this study does not limit itself to the description of the evolution of construction, or to the characteristic traits of the environment and architecture of certain periods. It attempts principally to isolate and analyze the forces and influences which generated changes in the configuration of the urban environment as well as in its architecture. These forces and influences have been divided into two categories: those dictated by the physical environment and those emanating from the activities of men, acting individually and collectively within the environment, according to their needs, technologies and ideologies. For the purpose of placing all these forces in their global context and in the chronological order of their appearance in the development of the city, this study has been divided into four parts. The first part deals with the location and site of Montreal and with the characteristics of its soil, substratum, and climate. The remaining three parts reflect the evolution of technological and economic forces, and of social and cultural influences.

The exceptional geographical situation of the island of Montreal at the confluent of several rivers marked its destiny, first as a centre for the fur trade and later as a commercial, industrial and financial centre. This privileged situation was further enhanced by improved means of transport and communication during the industrial period. On a human level, this situation accounts for Montreal's cosmopolitan nature.

The structure and the character of urban development were also to benefit from the island's situation and site at the crossroad of a communications' network and in the middle of a very fertile plain. Thus, the main concern of the first human settlement on the island and in the plain was to take advantage of this network of waterways and to protect it: this is reflected to this day in the regional structure of the metropolis. In a like manner, the early industrial settlement was also partly oriented along the St. Lawrence River axis. The original occupation of this fertile island according to the system of "côtes" is reflected today in the orthogonal grid of streets which is characteristic of the city. Finally, the migration of man power from the rural countryside into the city would determine the particular types of industries which were to settle in the city and would also be responsible to a large extent for the topographical division of the city into rich and poor districts and into anglophone and francophone districts, where each ethnic group's environment reflected both its command over the economy and its socio-cultural organization.

While the achievements of architecture and urbanisation reflected man's mastery over both economy and technology, Montreal's evolution revealed a strong dichotomy between academic architecture and urbanism on the one hand, and popular architecture and urbanism on the other hand. The former, as exemplified by Dollier de Casson's plan, by the plans for the Town of Mount-Royal, or by the architecture of Notre Dame church or Windsor station, reflect the hegemony of culture as well as the predominance of styles which, according to the period, were fashionable in France, in England or in the United States. Popular architecture and urbanism harboured no official pretensions and was therefore more authentic, reflecting more truly the interaction of prevailing forces and influences. The traditional Quebec house, the industrial type of housing and the early commercial and industrial architecture attest to this fact. Today, under the impact of spontaneous communications and improved means of urban transport, both the shape of the city and its architecture tend to fuse into standardized versions of the typical large North American city.

From this broad picture of the evolution of Montreal's architecture and environment over the last three centuries, it appears that the true essence and identity of the Canadian metropolis originated in a morphological evolution, in the "dynamic perenniality" of structures which left their mark on the land at various periods of history. In conclusion, the future for the harmonious development of Montreal depends on sound regional planning for the community and each and everyone assuming his responsibility in the planning of the living environment.

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At the University of Edinburgh where I spent marvellous years completing my post-graduate studies, my debt to the supervisors of this thesis, Professor Percy Johnson-Marshall and Dr F. R. Stevenson, is considerable. Professor Percy Johnson-Marshall, Head of the Department of Urban Design and Regional Planning, inspired me by his concern and love for the city, and aroused this interest in me. I wish also to express my deep appreciation to Dr F. R. Stevenson, for his understanding and his concern for this thesis, and his numerous constructive criticisms which are reflected in many pages of this work.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABC	Architecture-Bâtiment-Construction
BRH	Bulletin des recherches historiques
CANJ	The Canadian Antiquarian and Numismatic Journal
CESH	Contributions à l'étude des sciences de l'Homme
CGQ	Cahiers de géographie de Québec
CHAR	The Canadian Historical Association Report
JRAIC	Journal of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada
JSAH	Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians
MSRC	Mémoires de la Société Royale du Canada
MUP	McGill University Press
PUL	Presses de l'université Laval
PUM	Presses de l'université de Montréal
RAPQ	Rapport de l'archiviste de la Province de Québec
RCM	Revue de géographie de Montréal
RTC	Revue trimestrielle canadienne
SHM	Société Historique de Montréal

N.B. Sources followed by this mark (#) are listed in the bibliography under the heading "General Sources".

INTRODUCTION

This study deals with the development of architecture and the evolution of the urban environment in Montreal. This description of the city as a physical entity, with its structures and streets, its parks and monuments, its habitations, its places of work and of worship, is an attempt to circumscribe its evolution as an economic, social and cultural organism, inasmuch as this evolution manifests itself in visible and tangible ways. Our aim is to trace a broad picture of the development of Montreal, from the time of the first visits of the Sieur de Champlain at Place Royale to today's metropolis.

However, we do not intend to limit our study to the description of the evolution of construction, or to the characteristic traits of the environment and architecture of certain periods. We shall attempt to isolate and analyze the forces and influences which generated changes in the configuration of the urban environment as well as in its architecture. Such forces and influences are many and vary in significance and we could not isolate all of them. However, for the purpose of this study, we may divide these forces and influences

into two categories: those dictated by the physical environment and those emanating from the activities of men, acting individually and collectively within the environment, according to their needs, technologies and ideologies.

Geography is the most significant among the forces and influences of the first category. Montreal and its destiny cannot be separated from its geographical situation on the North American continent, and the growth of the city is intimately linked with its location on an island crowned with a hill and steep terraces: such natural characteristics tend to mark the development of the townscape. A knowledge of the geology of the site is basic to an understanding of the total picture. Thus, before the transportation revolution of modern times, Montreal, like other cities, extracted the necessary materials for construction from the strata of its soil. But the influence of such geological characteristics extends beyond the physical field. As we shall see later in the course of this study, the fact that the Montreal plain and soil lend themselves to agriculture was of great significance to the industrial development and the social composition of the city in the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. Finally, we shall consider the climate. Montrealers are very aware of their climate, whether enjoying periods of

mildness or fighting its rigors. How climate has influenced our past and present way of life, as well as our architecture, is not very well known.

In contrast with these forces and influences which remained fairly constant throughout the course of history, stands a second category of forces and influences. It includes technology, economics, demography, politics, the social structure, culture and other factors which seem to be in a state of constant flux, forever changing, with frequent brisk and radical mutations. Hence the need to place all these forces in their global context and in their chronological appearance in the development of the city. To this aim, this study has been divided into four parts.

The first part deals with the location and the geography of Montreal, the characteristics of its soil, substratum, and climate. A brief account of the way in which Europeans, who came from a variety of environments, reacted to New France's environment, completes this first part. Thus, we shall follow them in their early settlement of the land in and around the island of Montreal. The first settlement is of the greatest significance, for, as we shall see in the course of this study, it will indelibly mark the future structures and landscape of the city.

The remaining three parts reflect the evolution

of technological and economic forces. Historical periods are easily identifiable by such landmarks as the steam engine, industrial production, electronics and the transportation revolution. These landmarks will be used as a background for our study. Indeed, the steam engine and electronics seem to have had a greater influence on the urban environment than political and historical changes such as the Conquest.

The second part, covering the pre-industrial period, deals with the evolution, of both architecture and the urban environment, of the city from its foundation as a small community to about 1840. Relevant social and cultural characteristics of successive colonies settled on the St. Lawrence will be analyzed to determine their influence on the architecture and framework of urban life. This analysis will include French colonial architecture - what remains of it - and architecture in the first century of British domination. The comments of contemporary observers and visitors on the qualities and deficiencies of the urban environment of a pre-industrial frontier town conclude the first part.

Part III deals with the industrial revolution on the continent and its effects on economics, society, culture and hence on the urban environment. This was undoubtedly a crucial period in the brief history of our city as it signalled the onset of the kind of urban development which was to uproot

the traditional urban landscape. Montreal's identity has been deeply marked during that period, yet it remains one of the least known or documented periods in the city's history. Nevertheless an attempt will be made to discover the interacting forces and their effects on the growth, structures and shaping of the city, on public and religious architecture, on the rather remarkable commercial architecture and on the lesser-known domestic architecture. Value judgments on our heritage from the Victorian era complete Part III of this study.

Part IV deals with 20th century Montreal. It depicts a growing metropolis in the process of undergoing changes as deep and drastic as those of the industrial period in the 19th century. On the one hand, the "telephone and traffic" city spilling over its traditional boundaries is invading the rural plains, while on the other hand increasing concentration drives its skyscrapers upwards. In its present active state of development, it is difficult to judge Montreal as a whole. However, before concluding on the evolution of the city, a glance at the most significant development of our era completes the picture. Indeed, Place Ville Marie, Place Victoria and Place Bonaventure stand out as the heart of the emerging city.

To sum up, this study covers the history of Montreal's architecture within the context of the Montreal

environment. However, dates, matters of aesthetics and classifications according to schools of art are of lesser concern here than the forces and contingencies which determined the birth and development of successive kinds of environments and architectures.

The study of the emergence of these forces from the social, economic and cultural structure is as compelling as the study of their expression into topographical landmarks and artistic manifestations. This is, to our knowledge, the first study of its kind on the Canadian metropolis. We shall therefore briefly describe the sources of this study, to enable the reader to better understand the spirit in which it has been written as well as the field it covers.

Our study is a synthesis and as such demands a large amount of information in various fields relating to the city and architecture in general. Such printed sources have been grouped in the bibliography under the heading "General Sources". Technics and Civilization, The Culture of Cities and The City in History, by Lewis Mumford, are basic works on the evolution of the city in general. Other works treat of the same topic from a different point of view: Towns and Cities by Emrys Jones, Towns and Buildings Described in Drawings and Words, by Steen Eiler Rasmussen and The Geography of Towns by Arthur E. Smailes. Other studies deal with a

particular period in the history of the city: Victorian Cities, by Asa Briggs, The Modern Metropolis, by Hans Blumenfeld.

The following books deal with the history of western architecture to which Canada and Montreal contributed to a certain extent: An Outline of European Architecture by Nikolaus Pevsner, Space, Time and Architecture by Sigfried Giedion, and Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries by Henry Russel Hitchcock. Supplementary reading on more particular aspects of architecture include Victorian Architecture by Robert Furneaux Jordan and An Introduction to Modern Architecture by James Maude Richards. Because Montreal has undergone in turn specific influences from France, England and the United States (the latter influence is predominant today) the following books have been consulted: from France, L'architecture française and Les villes françaises by Pierre Lavedan; from England, A History of English Architecture by Peter Kidson, Peter Murray and Paul Thompson, British Townscapes by Ewart Johns, and the masterpiece by Rasmussen: London the Unique City; from the United States, The Making of Urban America by John William Reps which contains a wealth of information. Another important study, American Skyline by Christopher Tunnard and Henry Hope Reed is essential to an understanding of American architecture. Together with London the Unique City, it inspired the author of the present study

to undertake his research. Mumford has also written short studies on American urban architecture and civilization. Two of these greatly assisted us in the present study: Sticks and Stones and The Brown Decades. Specialized journals, like Architectural Forum, are the best sources of information on the manifestation of contemporary architecture and city planning in the United States. In Canada, and particularly in Quebec, three names stand out in the field of the history of architecture: Traquair, Morisset and Gowans. Ramsay Traquair, leader of the McGill school, has written several authoritative articles and a number of them have been collected into his last book: The Old Architecture of Quebec. On the French side, Gérard Morisset, was the pioneer responsible for the Inventaire des oeuvres d'art de la province de Québec and the author of L'architecture en Nouvelle-France, and Coup d'oeil sur les arts en Nouvelle-France. His works have inspired others like Michel Lessard and Huguette Marquis, authors of L'encyclopédie de la maison québécoise which is not a very rigorous study, but is nevertheless a good popular work. Together with works by Traquair and Morisset, Alan Gowans' important contribution in this field includes several solid articles, to which we often refer. He also wrote: Church Architecture in New France, which is to date the best monograph on the subject; Looking at Architecture in Canada,

revised and completed with Building Canada: An Architectural History of Canadian Life. In order to follow the development of contemporary architecture in Canada, one must rely on specialized journals like the Journal of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada and The Canadian Architect.

Our knowledge of the architecture and environment of Montreal has been enriched by the writings of Mgr Olivier Maurault and E.Z. Massicotte. Maurault was rector of the University of Montreal and besides several articles, he published an important monograph on the present Notre Dame Church on Place d'Armes (La Paroisse). His book, Marges d'histoires, was published in three volumes, the second of which includes several essays on the city's history and architecture. Massicotte, a hard-working researcher, left us a large number of articles published in the Bulletin des recherches historiques and Les cahiers des dix. His famous "collection", now in the National Library (Fauteux Annex) includes a large number of old prints, photographs, newspaper clippings and other interesting documents about our city.

One must look at the architecture and environment of Montreal in the light of the social, economic and cultural development of the metropolis. Several books on the history of Montreal cover these various subjects. William Henry Atherton's Montreal (1535-1914, 3 vol.) contains a

wealth of information on various subjects. John Irwin Cooper's Montreal, a Brief History, is a very informative book. Other works are of a more narrative nature: Histoire de Montréal by Robert Rumilly (4 volumes to date) and Kathleen Jenkins' Montreal, Island City of the St. Lawrence.

Apart from studies by Raoul Blanchard on Montreal's geography (particularly L'ouest du Canada français), few studies cover fully the economic, social and cultural aspects of the city's development. Among the attempts to deal with these topics, Montréal économique, is a collection of essays published on the occasion of the city's 300th anniversary. The Géographie humaine de Montréal was written by Raymond Tanghe, and to our knowledge, he was the only researcher who dealt with the question of housing in the more populous quarters. Norbert Lacoste's Les caractéristiques sociales de la population du grand Montréal is a valuable study on urban sociology in postwar Montreal. Finally, Montréal, guide d'excursions, a collection of articles on the most important aspects of Montreal's geography, was prepared for the 22nd International Congress on Geography which was convened in Montreal in August 1972. This guide contains a great deal more information than the ordinary excursion guide. Let us also mention the numerous issues of the Bulletin technique and the Cahiers d'urbanisme published by the City

Planning Department of the City of Montreal; they constitute the basis for a data bank on our physical and human environment.

Montreal has always played a key role in the history and development of Quebec and of Canada, and one must not neglect this aspect of its history. However, Quebec francophones, preoccupied by cultural survival, do not perceive Canadian history in the same manner as an English-speaking Canadian or a foreigner impressed by the country's potential. It is therefore preferable to make parallel studies of works like the Histoire du Canada français (2 vol.) by Lionel Groulx and The French Canadians, 1760-1967 (2 vol.) by Mason Wade; the Histoire du Canada, by the Parisian Robert Lacour-Gayet and the famous Dominion of the North by Donald Creighton. One must also read Canadians in the Making, a unique and outstanding social study by Arthur R. M. Lower. Similar studies for the province of Quebec include several short studies collected in the Essais sur le Québec contemporain or in French-Canadian Society which is a collection prepared under the direction of Marcel Rioux and Yves Martin. Finally, in the field of economics, there is a selection of good essays by W. T. Easterbrook and M. H. Watkins in Approaches to Canadian Economic History.

All the previously cited works, as well as several

books and articles indicated in the Bibliography of each chapter, constitute secondary sources. Whenever possible, we have attempted to draw on primary sources. Hence, for the purpose of this study, the most important primary source was Montreal itself, with its streets, its parks, its monuments, its habitations, its places of work, etc. During the whole course of this research, we have attempted as often as possible to refer to the existing, visible, tangible reality. At times, we had no other choice: e.g., there are hardly any writings or studies on commercial or domestic architecture of the Victorian era. However, Montreal, like any city, is like an organism in perpetual mutation and many of its streets, parks and buildings have disappeared over the years or have been transformed. The only way to retrace the past and to assess such changes would be to reconstruct the evolution of the city with historical maps, drawings, sketches, illustrations and other relevant documents.

Massicotte left us an exhaustive list of maps and plans of Montreal and of the island (refer to the Bulletin des recherches historiques, XX, nos. 2 and 3, February and March 1914). These documents are kept in the Archives of the City of Montreal and in the National Archives of Canada in Ottawa. For Montreal, during the French regime, we are already in possession of two worthwhile reconstructions: one

by H. Beaugrand and P.L. Morin, Le vieux Montréal, 1611-1803, and another, the very scholarly Images and figures de Montréal sous la France by Gustave Lanctôt. Historian Marcel Trudel has collected in his Atlas de la Nouvelle France a set of historical maps on the French occupation of the American continent.

The iconography of the buildings of our past may be found in municipal, provincial and national archives, as well as in the newspapers and magazines of the past century such as the Illustrated London News, the Canadian Illustrated News, or L'opinion publique. A selection of pictures, engravings, and illustrations have been published in Montréal: recueil iconographique (2 vol.) by Charles P. de Volpi and P.S. Winkworth. For Les vieilles églises de la province de Québec, 1647-1800 and Vieux manoirs, vieilles maisons, Pierre Georges Roy has collected a substantial number of photographs of old buildings in the Province of Quebec and in the Montreal region. Some of these buildings still exist today. William Notman, a pioneer in the art of photography, has left us a collection of photographs which is now at the University of McGill; some of his best pictures may be found in Portrait of a Period; a Collection of Notman Photographs, 1856-1915. Finally, anybody who is interested in the evolution of architecture and urban landscapes in Montreal ought to consult the

"Massicotte collection" to which we have referred earlier.

This study is above all a synthesis. Therefore we did not attempt to consult all the firsthand manuscripts and documents relating to our subject matter. At any rate, it would have been an impossible task, given the scope of our subject matter and the large number of documents - not all of them classified - piled up in the various archives. Manuscript have been occasionally consulted, to clarify certain points, like the characteristics of the Montreal "côte" or the role played by the ruling colonial French class in the control of construction and organization of the physical environment. Luckily, a large number of documents pertaining to such matters have already been collected, classified and published, some in the Rapport de l'archiviste de la province de Québec, published annually for over half a century, others in various inventories like the Inventaire des ordonnances des intendants de la Nouvelle-France conservées aux archives provinciales de Québec (4 vol.), the Edits, ordonnances royaux, déclarations et arrêts du Conseil d'Etat du roi concernant le Canada (3 vol.) or the Répertoire des arrêts, édits, mandements, ordonnances et règlements conservés dans les archives du Palais de Justice de Montréal, 1640-1760, a repertoire which has been prepared by Massicotte.

The memoirs, descriptions and accounts of journeys

left to us by stationed men as well as observers and travellers of different eras, constitute another primary source on which we have relied consistently. As witnesses of their times, works like the famous Relations des Jésuites, the reports by one Gédéon de Catalogne or Chaussegros de Léry as well as the very detailed Description topographique de la province du Bas-Canada by Joseph Bouchette in the 19th century, enable us to follow the evolution of the settlement of Montreal. We have also relied on the accounts of Jacques Cartier, Samuel de Champlain, Father de Charlevoix, the Swede Peter Kalm and the American Benjamin Silliman. As steamboats made navigation across the ocean less perilous, such accounts became more numerous. The "de visu" testimonies of a John M. Duncan, Théodore Pavie, an Edward Allen Talbot, an Henri de Lamothe and others, are irreplaceable and enable us to follow the topographic and architectural evolution of Montreal. These works, as well as several others of the same kind indicated in the bibliography of each chapter, are available at the Gagnon Room of the municipal Library.

These are the works which we consulted in the preparation of this study. The author does not claim to have completely assimilated all the information, consideration, and opinions contained in them. He is particularly aware of the numerous shortcomings and of the lack of thoroughness in

some of the opinions expressed in this study. Nevertheless, he hopes that such a synthesis will be found useful, if it were only to acquaint the reader with a fascinating city: Montreal.

PART I

WHERE THE OLD WORLD AND THE NEW WORLD MEET

La situation de la ville est fort agréable. Du costé du sud, et (du) sudoüest est une très belle plaine qui se termine à la Rivière St-Pierre et coste St-Paul, où les terres sont très fertiles en toutes sortes de grains et (de) légumes. Du costé de l'ouëst les terres se lèvent en amphithéâtre jusques au pied de la montagne distante de la ville de trois quarts de lieue, (...) Derrière et autour de la d(ite) montagne sont les costes Ste-Catherine, Nostre Dame des Neiges, de Liesse et des Vertues, nouvellement establies. Les terres y sont très belles et de bonne qualité pour les arbres fruitiers et pour produire toutes sortes de grains et (de) légumes. Du costé du nordouëst et du nord de la ville, il y a aussy de belles plaines, entrecoupées de petits costeaux qui se terminent à St-Laurent, St-Michel et la Visitation, costes aussy nouvellement establies et où les terres sont très belles tant pour les arbres fruitiers que pour rapporter toutes sortes de grains et de légumes. Du côté du nordest de la ville sont les costes de Ste-Marie, St-Martin et St-François qui se terminent à la Longue Pointe où finit la paroisse.

Memoirs on the Plans of the domaines and habitations of the governments of Quebec City, Three Rivers and Montreal, by Gédéon de Catalogne, engineer, November 7, 1712.¹

CHAPTER ONE

THE KEY TO THE WEST

Ce sera un jour un païs tres-propre
pour estre la situation d'une grande
et grosse ville.

Hierosme Lalemant, Relation de la
Nouvelle France, en l'année 1663².

1. At the Crossroads

A glance at the map of North America clearly shows the St. Lawrence River as the most deeply penetrating route into the continent. Running between the mountain masses of the Canadian Shield and the Appalachians, it reaches to the "Mediterranean" of North America, i.e. the Great Lakes, and to the vast interior plains.

The river's deep penetration played a key role in the history of European exploration of the New World and accounts for the importance explorers attached to the river. At the beginning, they did not grasp the extent of the river's network as we know it today, but the river itself kept hopes alive: they believed it might lead them to countries rich in gold. Indeed, not even the plentiful catches in the bays of the Atlantic Coast could help them forget that gold.

Jacques Cartier, Canada's discoverer, received the following order from Francis I: "descouvrir certaines ysles et pays où l'on dit qu'il se doit trouver grant quantité d'or

et autres riches choses"³. Even if he were never to discover the Klondike, the search for the northern passage to China remained an attractive proposition. It was not Canada that Cartier and his peers were hoping to discover, but gold or the route to Cathay. From the account of his first voyage to Canada in 1534, it is clear that he searched in vain for the passage to The Orient⁴.

The following year, during his second voyage, he thought he had struck good luck, when the Indians showed him "le chemin et commencement du grand fleuve de Hochelaga et chemin de Canada qui provient de si loin qu'on n'a pas souvenance qu'un homme en ait vu la source"⁵. Cartier was convinced that this was the famous passage and in his report to the king on his second voyage, he insisted that this river of some 800 leagues could lead to Asia⁶.

Thus, in the fall of 1535, Cartier sailed up the St. Lawrence and on October 2, reached Hochelaga, a small fortified Huron town at the foot of a mountain, which he named "Mont-Royal". The fast rapids rendered all navigation impossible and he was unable to sail any further. Unwittingly, Cartier was actually the first European to set foot on the Island of Montreal and to behold the site of the future metropolis of Canada. It is interesting to note that these rapids (the Lachine Rapids), while robbing him at the time of all

hopes of reaching Asia, were to contribute to the prosperity of Montreal.

Jacques Cartier did not only discover Canada; he also discovered one of the largest rivers in the world, for the St. Lawrence River commands a wide territory. Its vast drainage basin is a territory of the greatest geographic and economic importance. Its network of waterways is far-reaching and stretches from the vast continental plain to the many riches of the Canadian Shield, of which it drains most of the south side. Some 1600 km inside the continent, it opens into a "sea" of fresh water: the Great Lakes. The latter lead into the Mississippi Basin, to the Hudson Basin through the Mohawk River and to the MacKenzie. This hinterland has grown into today's industrial heartland of America and on the shores, as well as in the immediate vicinity of the Great Lakes, cities like Kingston, Hamilton, Toronto, Rochester, Buffalo, Cleveland, Windsor, Milwaukee, Detroit and Chicago testify to the geographical and economic importance of this continental network⁷.

The French founded their American empire on the great river axis, on this "route essentielle par laquelle les explorateurs s'élanceront vers la Baie d'Hudson, vers l'horizon mystérieux de la Mer de l'Ouest et vers le Mississippi", to quote historial Trudel⁸. Even better than Cartier, the

great figures of French colonisation, like Champlain, Frontenac and Talon, grasped the geographic and economic significance of the deep thrust of the St. Lawrence into the American continent. It was obviously not the passage to the Orient - although it seems Champlain still believed it was - nor was it the road to the lands of gold. The river did, however, offer important economic possibilities and, for the time being, a ready access to regions rich in fur. On this particular topic, "Intendant" Talon, in one of his enthusiastic letters to the Court of France, refers to this vast country "différamment arrousé par le fleuve de St-Laurens et par de belles rivières qui se deschargent dans son lict par ses costez, (qui) a ses communications par ces mêmes rivières avec plusieurs nations sauvages riches en peleteries ..."⁹.

From a geographical as well as from an economic viewpoint, the location of the Island of Montreal is exceptional: it is about 1000 miles inland, at the confluence of three important waterways. These waterways formed natural corridors into the land, along which roads were eventually built. The island is right on the St. Lawrence River, reaching out to the Atlantic Ocean and Europe via the lower St. Lawrence, and to the Great Lakes, Ohio, and Mississippi regions via the upper St. Lawrence. Forty miles down the river, the Richelieu River, through the Adirondacks, traces

a route to the Hudson River. The latter, is another inroad into the continent and flows into the Atlantic Ocean in New York City. Above the island, the Ottawa River, somewhat neglected today, played an important part at the beginning of colonization. Trappers used it in their search for the rich furs of the western region.

The importance of the situation of Montreal as one of America's most important crossroads was not lost on Father Barthélémy Vimont, editor of the Relation de la Nouvelle-France in 1642: "depuis l'emboucheure du grand fleuve et du Golphe Saint Laurens, iusques à cette Isle, on y compte prés de deux cens lieuës; et toute cette grande étendue d'eau est navigable, en partie par de grands Vaisseaux, en partie par des Barques" and the island "donne un accès et un abord admirable à toutes les Nations de ce grand pays: car il se trouve au Nord et au Midy, au Levant et au Couchant, des rivières qui se jettent dans les fleuves de Saint Laurens et dans la rivière des Prairies qui environnent cette Isle..."¹⁰. Further, Father Paul Ragueneau, editor of the Relation of 1651, pertinently concluded that "c'est une place tres-avantageuse pour toutes les Nations supérieures qui veulent avoir commerce avec nous ..." ¹¹.

The Island of Montreal was not only at the crossroads of waterways: the surrounding geographical features

imposed it as the heart of these waterways. The Hochelaga Archipelago, made up mainly of the Islands of Montreal and Jésus, divide the St. Lawrence River into three streams. Each stream flows through rapids which are difficult to cross, especially the more impetuous Saint-Louis Rapids. Hence the name Tiotiake which the natives had given the Island of Montreal, meaning "the Island amidst Rapids"¹².

The St-Louis Rapids, later re-named the Lachine Rapids, prevented any further navigation. They stopped Jacques Cartier in 1535, and Champlain and others later on. Below the Saint-Louis Rapids, nature had created an excellent natural harbour several feet deep. One could disembark there and, through portages, attempt to reach the navigable part of the St. Lawrence River. Thus, Montreal became a bridgehead, a transit center between sea and inland navigation, an indispensable trade and storage center. Montreal was thus the key to the lower and upper St. Lawrence, to the Ottawa valley road, to the Atlantic and to the West, to the Old World and to the New World¹³. (Fig. 2)

The whole destiny of the future metropolis rests on its role as a communication link. The economic and technical revolutions of the 19th and 20th centuries would further enhance its favorable geographical location on this vast continent where transportation was to play such an important

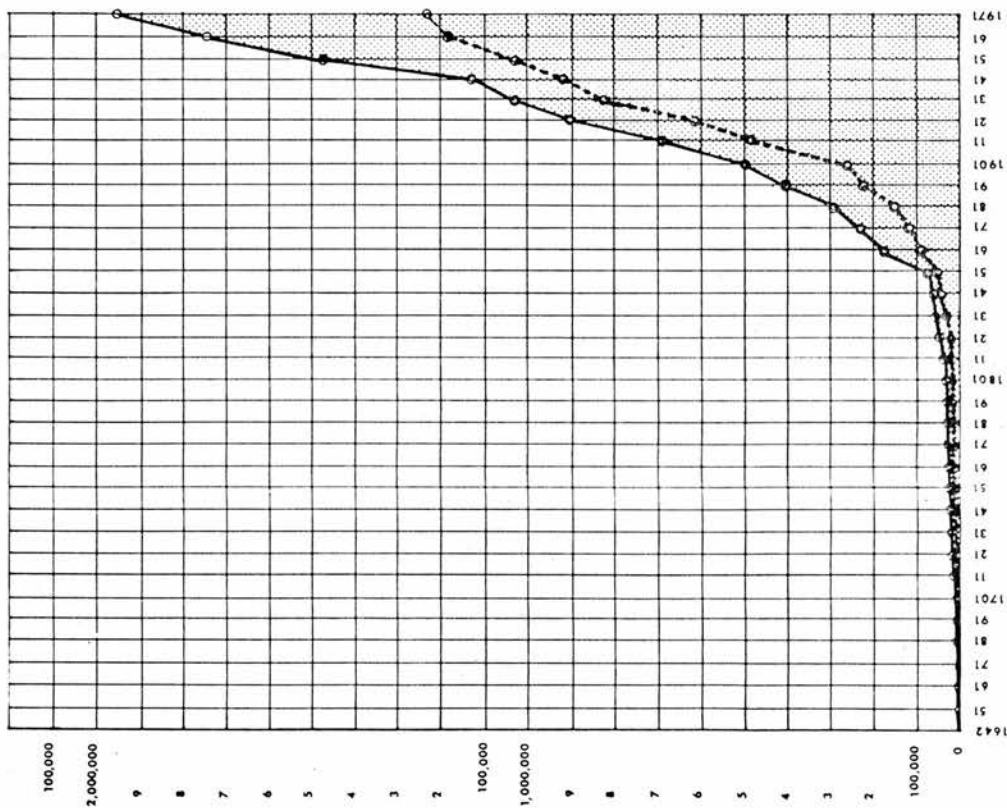


FIG. 1 Population growth on the island and in the city of Montreal.

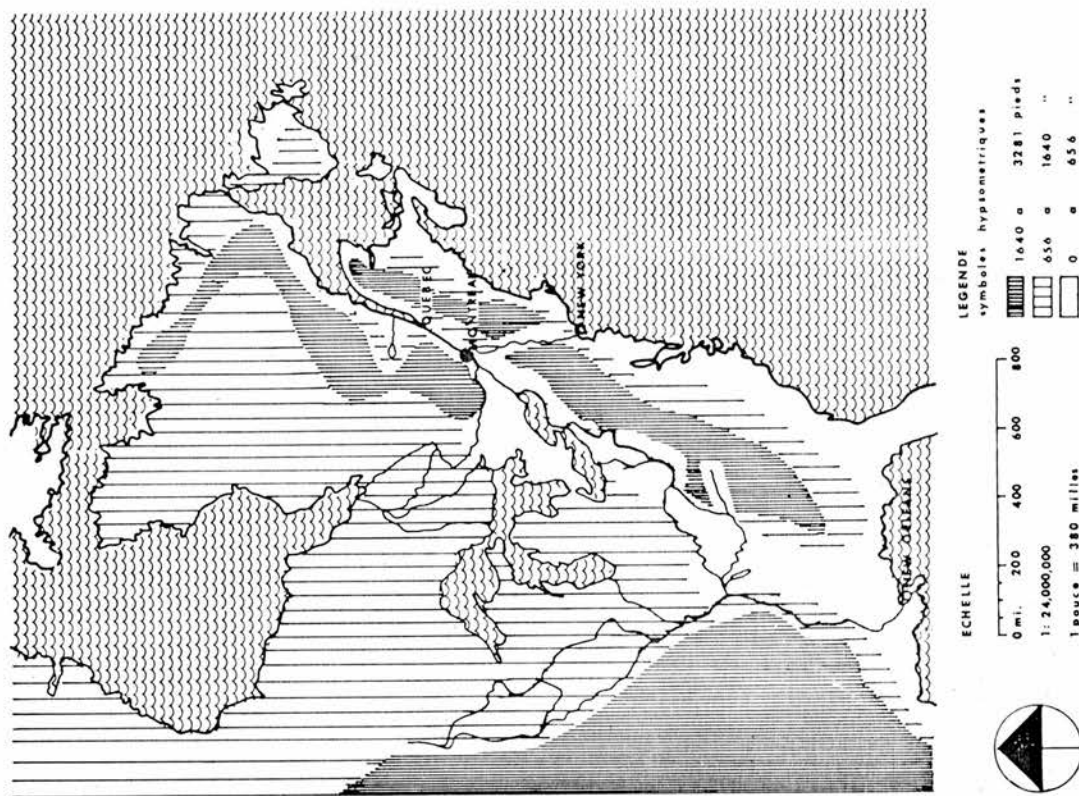


Fig. 2 Geographic situation of the island of Montreal

part. Natural obstacles on rivers were to be progressively eliminated or circumvented, steamboats would replace sailboats and railroads would use the corridors cleared by the waterways. With the colonization of the West, Montreal, located at the crossroads of continental traffic, was to grow rich as a trade, production and distribution center. Such a unique destiny would leave its mark on the very character of our city. In her novel, Bonheur d'occasion (1947), Gabrielle Roy expressed this feeling in her description of a humble house on the shores of the Lachine canal ...

Mais la maison n'était pas seulement sur le chemin des cargos. Elle était aussi sur la route des voies ferrées, au carrefour pour ainsi dire des réseaux de l'Est et de l'Ouest et des voies maritimes de la grande ville. Elle était sur le chemin des océans, des Grands Lacs et des prairies¹⁴.

With the trade of goods came the exchange of ideas. Montreal was to become a privileged center where ideas would merge on sometimes clash. In Montreal, the Old World and the New World met. Both its architecture and the character of its town planning were to be deeply affected by this encounter.

2. An Exceptional Location

The exceptional geographic location of the island of Montreal could not by itself account for the city's prosperity from the second half of the 17th century onwards. In

those days, urban development was closely tied to the productivity of surrounding land and to the limited ability to transport surplus production to the city in exchange for equipment and services. The soil of the Montreal Basin was undoubtedly suitable for farming. The fact that the Montreal plain was highly suited to human occupation has been established by the geographer Blanchard. There are several navigable waterways, the soil of the plain is the most fertile in the province, and the configuration of the land does not present any obstacle to settlement or transportation anywhere. The climate constituted the only hindrance in the form of periodic freezing of the waterways, but this was to be a hindrance only until the advent of mechanized means of land transportation¹⁵.

On October 3, 1535, Jacques Cartier and his companions realized that the site was suitable for a settlement:

Et nous estans sus ladicte montaigne
(the Mont Royal), eusmes veue et
congnissance de plus de trente
lieues, à l'envyron d'icelle; dont
il y a, vers le nort, une rangée
de montaignes, qui sont est et ouaist
gisantes, et autant devers le su.
Entre lesquelles montaignes est la
terre, la plus belle qu'il soit possible
de veoyr, labourable, unye et
plaine. Et par le meilleu desdictes
terres, voyons ledict fleuve...¹⁶.

This was Cartier's description of the plain of Montreal, which is part of the vast plain of the St. Lawrence Basin. Lying between the mountain ranges of the Canadian Shield and of the Appalachians, the St. Lawrence Basin stretches westward from a point east of Quebec City to the Great Lakes and the huge continental plains.

The geological formation of the Montreal plain accounts for its evenness and richness. It was flooded by the ocean at the very beginning of the paleozoic age. Sediments settled into thick layers, accounting for the plain's calciferous sub-strata. It then underwent the erosion of the secondary and tertiary eras, a period of 250 million years. The Laurentian plain was to acquire the characteristics with which we are familiar today as a result of the four consecutive glaciations of the post tertiary age. Hard rock formations like Mount Royal and other hills in the regions, were the only ones to have withstood the long periods of erosion as well as the pressure of glaciers, some of them 3000 feet thick. Collapsing under the weight of such a mass, the eastern continental crust was again flooded by the ocean, named the Champlain Sea, which left rich alluvial deposits, drowning some of the disparities in elevation. This shows clearly on a map of isohyptic lines of the plain, representing an area equivalent to that described by a 30 mile long radius having its point of

origin at the center of the Island of Montreal. Except for the rather small hills of Oka, Rigaud and Montreal, one rarely encounters grades of more than 5%, and most of the land lies less than 200 feet above the mean sea level¹⁷. (Fig. 3)

This land is not only the most even and richest in Quebec but it also benefits from the climatic conditions which are mild and most suited for human settlement. There are more than 140 successive frost-free days, more than anywhere else in the Province. Snow covers the ground for 12 weeks only, twice as short a period as in some other inhabited regions of Quebec. Following the configuration of the Laurentian Valley, winds blow predominantly from the southwest, the west and the northeast. Carrying moisture from the Gulf of Mexico, the Great Lakes and the Atlantic Ocean, they regularly release more than 40 inches of rain annually. Except for a somewhat dryer month of April, the average monthly precipitation is over three inches but below four inches. The summer is hot: the June, July and August temperatures average 65°F with sunshine for more than 50% of the days. Such climatic conditions are highly suited for growing vegetables during the sunny season.

Montreal is located at latitude 45°30', like Milan and Venice, and somewhat further north than Bordeaux. Its climate is continental: hot summers followed by long,

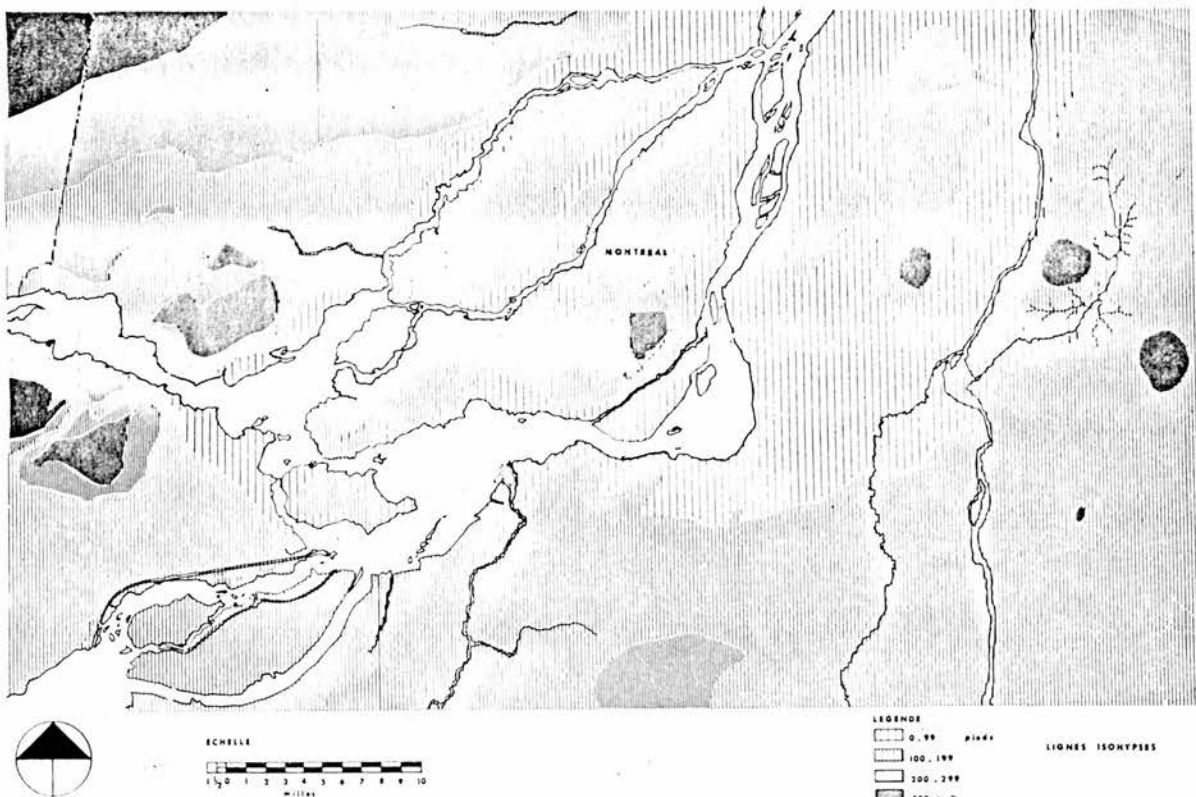
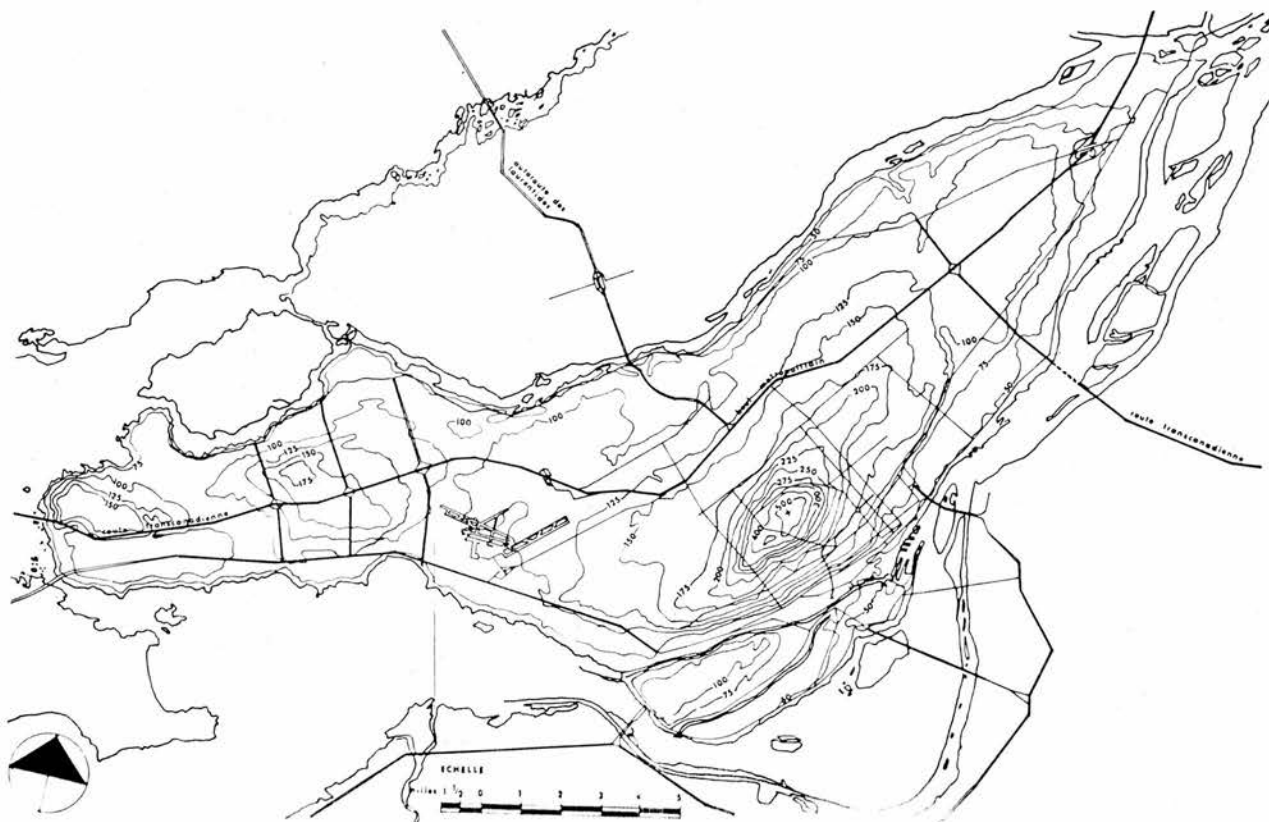


Fig. 3 Map of the contour lines of the plain of Montreal.

Fig. 4 Natural topography of the island of Montreal.



cold winters. In December, January and February, the average temperature is around 16°F. The percentage of sunny days in January is 25% and in February 40%. The rate of snow accumulation is more dramatic: an average of 120 inches fall annually in the plain. Such a thick layer has the advantage of protecting the soil against the rigorous cold¹⁸. Nowadays, the climate is no longer an inconvenience, but in the days when colonization depended directly on the European metropolis, the development of Montreal and of the colony came to a temporary standstill when the waterways used for communications and supplies were frozen for four months of the year. French vessels were able to sail to Quebec but once a year, compared with twice or three times a year to the Carriibbean. In that respect, the British colonies on the Atlantic Coast had a definite advantage. Montreal would have to wait until it was linked by rail in 1853 to an ice-free Atlantic port before prospering at a faster pace.

The richness of the soil of the great Montreal plain as well as favourable climatic conditions during the sunny season definitely encouraged farmers to settle on the land and stimulated exchanges between food producers and suppliers of goods and services. Such exchanges are essential to the life of a city. As early as 1684, Baron de la Hontan confirms this in the account of his voyage when he

notes: "les côtes ou seigneuries au sud de l'île produisent un revenu considérable, car les habitations sont bonnes, et les habitants riches en blé, bétail, volaille et mille autres denrées qu'ils vendent ordinairement à la ville"¹⁹.

During the first centuries the Island of Montreal, with its area of some 115,000 acres²⁰ was to become the base of this agricultural community. Judging from the testimony of the first European who visited the island, the natives were aware of the qualities of its soil: we

marchames plus oultre, et envyron demye lieu de là, commençames à trouver les terres labourées et belles, grandes champagnes, plaines de bledz de leur terre, qui est comme mil de Brezil, aussi groz, ou plus, que poix, duquel vivent, ainsi que nous faisons de froment. Et au parmy d'icelles champagnes, est scituée et assise ladicte ville de Hochelaga, près et joignant une montaigne, qui est, à l'entour d'icelle, labourée et fort fertile...²¹.

Testimonies abound also in les Relations des Jésuites on the splendor and fertility of the island. Here is the testimony of one Jérôme Lalemant (1663):

Ce lieu-là surpasse encore tous les autres en beauté: car les isles qui se rencontrent dans l'embouchure de ces deux fleuves (the St. Lawrence and the Rivière-des-Prairies), sont autant de grandes et de belles prairies, les unes en long, les autres en rond, ou autant de jardins faits à plaisir, tant pour

les fruits qui s'y rencontrent,
 que pour la forme et l'artifice
 dont la nature les a préparées,
 avec tous les agremens que les
 Peintres peuvent représenter dans
 leur paysage ²².

Finally, nearly two centuries later, Joseph Bouchette wrote
 in his Topographical Dictionary of the Province of Lower Canada:

"Montreal is the most considerable island in the province and
 its superior fertility has acquired for it the distinguished
 appellation of the Garden of Canada."²³

It is with a precise reason in mind that we have
 lingered on the very hospitable character of the plain as well
 as of the Island of Montreal: the rural settlement which such
 conditions favoured would have many significant repercussions
 on our urban environment. For, as we shall see in the next
 chapter, the structures as well as the orientation of the
 urban landscapes of the metropolis grew almost without any
 alterations out of the initial pattern of rural settlement.
 Moreover, from the second half of the 19th century onward,
 this populous agricultural community was to supply the budding
 industry with such a source of manpower that to this day Mon-
 treal owes the success of its industrial expansion to this
 abundant source of inexpensive labour.²⁴ Today, the rich land
 of the plain is still a matter of concern but for other rea-
 sons. Indeed, as the process of development accelerates to

the point of becoming uncontrollable, the best land for urban settlement unfortunately remains the best land for agricultural exploitation: a tragic dilemma.

From the point of view of architecture, the geological formation of the Montreal soil has yielded a vast choice of materials used in the construction of buildings in the city. There was an abundance of timber, both on the island and in the neighbouring countryside. Gédéon de Catalogne, a French engineer, was undoubtedly the best-informed man on the physical resources of the colony. He confirms that in 1684 the parish of Montreal "n'estoit presque qu'une forest de toutes sortes d'arbres très gros particulièrement des pins, érables, bois blancs, ormes, hestres et merisiers et cèdres...". At the time, the parish included an important part of the island, stretching from Verdun to Long Point; besides half of Côte St-Pierre and Côte St-Paul, it included the following "côtes": Notre-Dame-des-Neiges, de Liesse, des Vertus, St-Laurent, Ste-Catherine, St-Michel and de la Visitation²⁵.

Rocky cropouts in about 15 locations on the island, in Rosemount, Côte St-Michel, Bordeaux and Cartierville, as well as in some districts from Ile Jésus (St-Martin, St-Vincent de Paul and St-François de Sales), were turned into quarries which supplied almost all the stone required for construction in Montreal. Most of it is limestone from the

Trenton and Chazy formations and comes in three varieties: semi-crystalline broad stones of average roughness, hard and dark fine grained stones, and a third type combining characteristics of the two previous types. Two important quarries, those of Martineau and Villeray, were still cutting stone from these formations in the first decades of the 20th century. They have now been filled and changed into neighborhood parks. The rather dark and cheerless colour of these limestones tainted the old streets of Montreal with a particular local flavour, a fact which was not lost on visitors, as we shall see in Chapter 6.

The detritic mantle, covering about 90% of the island area, as well as a large part of the great plain, is partly composed of marine sedimentary clay, which is particularly well suited for the manufacture of bricks. Samuel de Champlain, a great geographer, had already noticed this characteristic of the Montreal soil during his voyage in 1611: "Il y a aussi quantité de prairies de très-bonne terre grasse à potier, tant pour bricque que pour bastir, qui est une grande commodité"²⁶. The marine clay on the island lies mainly in wide strips stretching from Verdun to Pointe-aux-Trembles between the river and the Sherbrooke Terrace. Bricks were made with the clay. With their characteristic red, they became the most commonly used covering material for domestic construction.

This red is now the dominant colour of whole neighbourhoods. Such bricks were manufactured among others by two brickyards located in the east end of the city, one on Iberville Street and the other on Davidson Street, off Sherbrooke Street. The layer of clay stretching between the Sherbrooke Street Terrace and the river varies in depth from a few feet to over 150 feet. It is therefore a poor site for construction. Yet, it was on this very band of soft clay that the heart of the town as well as the industrial center of the metropolis were built, for reasons dictated by the geography of the site. Engineering techniques made up for the inherent weaknesses of the ground, but at ever-increasing costs and with increasing difficulties. Luckily the rest of the island is covered with a clay which is more resistant to compression and is more suitable for foundations. This is particularly true in a wide zone, roughly delineated by Côte-des-Neiges Road, the Metropolitan Boulevard, Pie IX Boulevard and Mount Royal Street, where solid rock lies less than 10 feet below the ground.²⁷

Leaving aside for the moment the influence of climate on architecture, a topic to be treated with reference to specific cases, let us look into some specific aspects of the island's natural topography which dictated the choice of a site for the first settlement and would determine its future orientation.

Mount Royal stands almost at the center of the island. It is a massive and soft-looking hill, created by volcanic outflows which penetrated through the sedimentary crust. The mountain, as it is familiarly known, stands 769' above sea level, then slopes down towards the extremities of the island. This accounts for the slight bulge which rests about 200' above sea level towards the center of the island, sloping down to a height varying between 10' and 30" towards the shores. The contour lines which slope gently downwards along the length of the island, drop more abruptly across its breadth, especially on the east side of the mountain, where they reach the river in successive terraces. There is a drop of 75 feet in the short distance between Lafontaine Park and St. Catherine Street. Certain geographers maintain that these terraces correspond to the old beaches of the Champlain Sea. According to Blanchard, they correspond to underwater ridges, caused by cumulative deposits gathered on the east side of Mount Royal in an age when the mountain stood in the way of the undersea currents of the Champlain Sea.²⁸ (Fig. 4)

Two main terraces border the eastern side. The first lies at about 150 feet of altitude and extends roughly from Maisonneuve Park to the municipality of Montreal West. It is referred to as the Sherbrooke Street Terrace, for the street follows the escarpment for several miles. Immediately

below this high terrace, at an average altitude of 80 feet, lies a low terrace extending to the river between McGill Street and the Canadian Pacific marshalling yard at Hochelaga. At the time of Montreal's foundation, a network of valleys with small rivers ran through the lower terrace. A muddy creek, the Saint-Martin River, flowed along the very path of today's Craig Street, to the site of today's Chaboillez Square, where it poured into the Saint-Pierre River. The latter ran from the southwest into the St. Lawrence into the site of today's Youville Square. In the first centuries the development of Montreal was deeply influenced by the topography of the lower terrace.

3. The First Settlement

Samuel de Champlain should be given credit for the choice of the site of the future City of Montreal. He was undoubtedly qualified for the task. He was a great explorer, an excellent cartographer and geographer; he won fame as an ethnographer and as the founder of several cities and of an empire. Champlain, who was born in Brouage, near LaRoche, around 1570, was truly a man of the Renaissance. He combined the energetic temperament of a man of action with that of a patient and methodical observer, stimulated by a tenacious curiosity. Among other learned works, he was the author of a treatise on Indian ethnography and of a superb geographical

inventory of Acadia, the St. Lawrence and Great Lakes region.

Champlain had been hired by a group of businessmen from Rouen who had obtained monopolies in the fur trade from Henry IV. At first, he sought to establish trading posts on the Atlantic Coast. In 1604, he established a settlement on the Island of Ste-Croix (now known as Ile Douchet on the coast of Maine), which he abandoned in the following year in order to found Port Royal on the north shore of the Annapolis Basin in Nova Scotia.²⁹ But he quickly realized that the Acadian posts were difficult to defend and that the Appalachian Range constituted an obstacle to trade with the native people of the interior of the country. He therefore advised his patrons "de s'aller loger dans le fleuve Saint-Laurent, où le commerce et traffic pouvaient faire beaucoup mieux qu'en Acadie"³⁰.

With surprising perspicacity, Champlain had grasped the geographic and economic significance of the deep penetration of the river into the interior of the continent. Being a geographer, and an astute soldier, he established a settlement in 1608 at Quebec, precisely at the narrowest part of the river, so as to guard the entrance of the future French empire in America.³¹ He quickly realized that the fur trade would greatly benefit from the establishment of a trading post on the Island of Montreal, which was at the crossroads of the

river network. Thus, on the 28th day of May, 1611, he surveyed the approaches to Grand Saut Island "pour trouver un lieu propre pour la scituation d'une habitation, & y preparer une place pour y bastir..."³².

What precise place did Champlain choose? In his own words, "Mais en tout ce que je vy, je n'en trouvoy point de lieu plus propre qu'un petit endroit, qui est iusque où les barques & chalouppes peuvent monter aisement...". Champlain therefore chose a place at the very limits of navigable waters, at the foot of the Lachine Rapids, and named it Place Royale.

Et proches de ladite place
Royalle y a une petite riviere
qui va assez avant dedans les
terres, tout le long de laquelle
y a plus de 60 arpens de terre
desertés qui font comme prairies,
où l'on pourrait semer des grains,
& y faire des jardinages. (...)
Ayant donc recogneu fort particulièrement & trouvé ce lieu un
des plus beaux qui fut en cette
riviere, je fis aussitost couper
& deffricher le bois de ladite place
Royalle pour la rendre unie,
& preste à y bastir...³³.

This Place Royale, which was chosen, named and cleared by Champlain, today corresponds to Pointe-à-Callière; it is the triangle bounded by Commune Street and Place Youville, with the monument of Young at one of its apexes. In these days, the small St-Pierre River flowed through the site

of today's Place d'Youville. This provided the site with a means of protection that was not lost on Champlain... "& peut on faire passer l'eau au tour aisement, & en faire une petite isle, & s'y établir comme l'on voudra"³⁴. The penetration of the St-Pierre River also presented other advantages. As it was navigable for a great part of its course, it shortened the portages required to go around the Lachine Rapids; moreover, its mouth offered a small harbour sheltered from the strong currents of the St. Lawrence River which prevailed at that place.

Unfortunately, and for reasons that were to remain obscure, the projects that Champlain nurtured for his Place Royale would not be carried out during his lifetime. The site was undoubtedly not forgotten and the natives, trappers and merchants probably used it at some time or another as a meeting place. However, another thirty years would pass before a permanent settlement would be established on Place Royale, which Champlain had left "preste à y bastir".

Finally in the summer of 1642, about forty colonists settled permanently at Place Royale under the governorship of the Sieur Chomedey de Maisonneuve who will be remembered by history as the founder of Montreal. One is tempted to believe that this group of pioneers had been attracted by the economic prospects of the site. This was not the case.

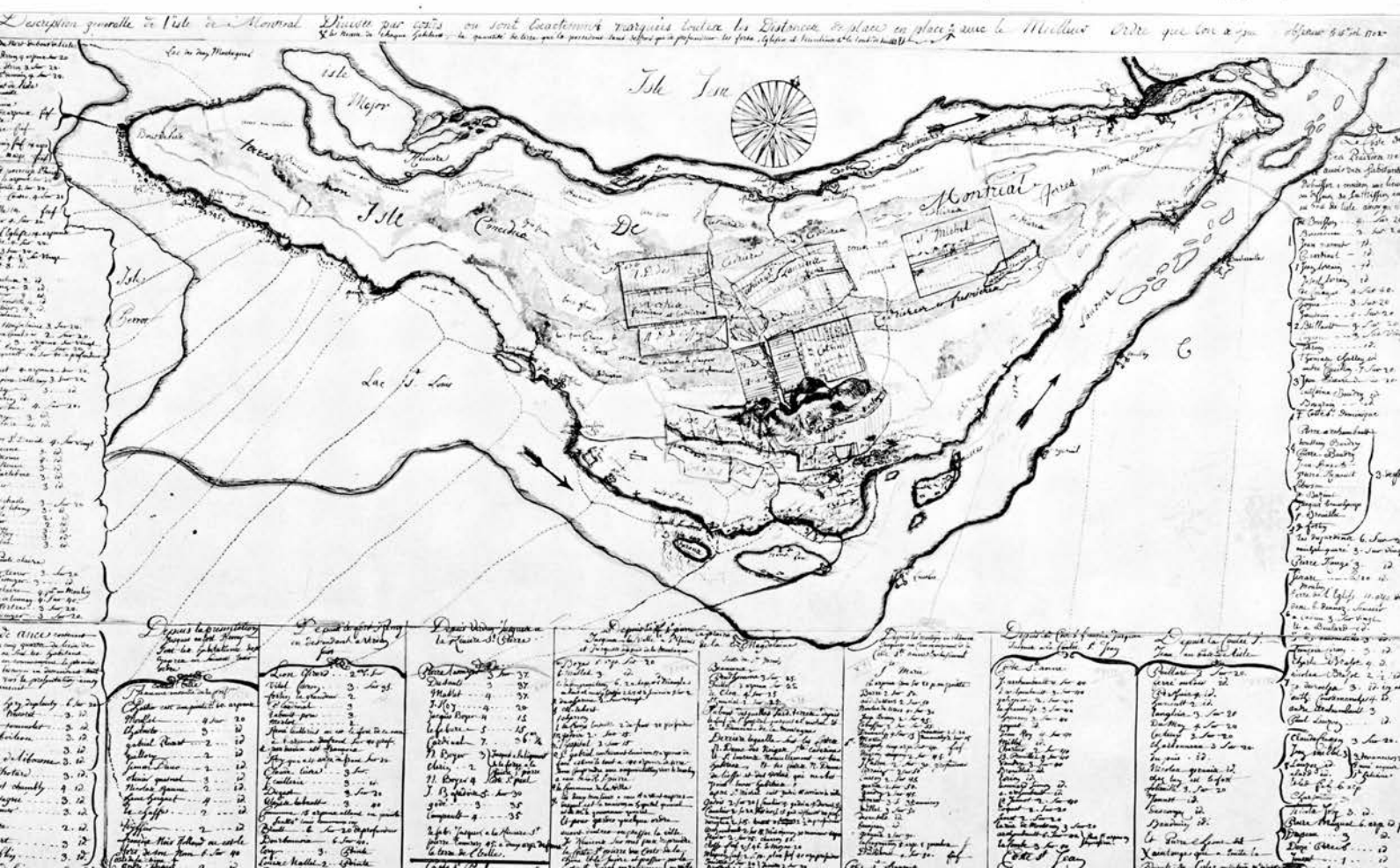
The foundation of Montreal is unparalleled in the history of European colonization. It was in fact sponsored by a society of devout people³⁵, most of whom owned considerable fortunes and some of whom were titled and were received at the court of France. It was the avowed purpose of this foundation "d'y assembler un peuple composé de Français et de Sauvages qui seront convertis pour les rendre sédentaires, les former à cultiver les arts mécaniques de la terre, les unir sous une même discipline, dans les exercices de la vie chrétienne..."³⁶. With that purpose in mind, the society had acquired the island of Montreal precisely because it was "pour quatre-vingts nations barbares, comme un centre propre à les attirer, à cause des rivières qui y affluent de toute part"³⁷.

The project of the Société Notre-Dame quickly proved utopia, and Montreal's first settlement became a prosperous trading post rather than a centre of religious proselytism. The fort of Ville-Marie, erected by Maisonneuve and his companions, was not very different from the quarters erected by Champlain on Ste-Croix Island in 1604. There still exists a plan of this fort, which was located near the present-day Alexandra Pier, somewhere between de Callières Street and du Port Street. It is a rather rough drawing made in 1647 by Jean Bourdon and is the very first plan in our possession on the origins of the city of Montreal. Although the buildings

were probably very rustic in reality, their locations on the plan denotes a classical layout. The living quarters of the civil and religious authorities, the public utilities building, the store, the kitchen and the bake-house are grouped with a certain symmetry around a small central square. The settlers' dwellings are also symmetrically located on either side of an axis leading from the main gate to the governor's house. We do not know whether Bourdon's plan accurately depicts the exact location of the buildings. We do not know either whether the plan which Champlain left us of his settlement on Ste-Croix Island conformed to reality. We know one thing for certain: both plans are so much alike in spirit, that we are compelled to accept the fact that, in those days, a certain classical conception inspired the layout of colonial settlements, or at least their graphic representation, or perhaps both.³⁸ (Pl. 1)

1. Plan of the fort of Ville-Marie, drawn in 1647 by Jean Bourdon.

2. Section of the "terrier" of the island of Montreal, dated October 15, 1702.



CHAPTER TWO

THE ISLAND COLONY

Modern towns which have arisen little by little can only be understood by the study of their history...
Steen Eiler Rasmussen.¹

1. Dispute over an Empire

Professor John Summerson, in his excellent book on Georgian London, devised a way of presenting a global picture of the development of London in the seventeenth and eighteenth century. He suggested that the reader imagine himself suspended one mile above the city for a period of time equal to two centuries, with the years going by at the rate of one year per second.² If we follow the same procedure to study the progression of human occupation on the Island of Montreal during the same period, two facts come to light. First, the Fort of Ville-Marie is the hub of a centrifugal topographical growth expanding somewhat like the surface rings caused by a pebble thrown in the water. This is hardly surprising, for according to Summerson, a city is like a plant or an ant-hill: it is the product of a collective, unconscious will with few preconceived intentions.³ A second fact becomes evident from our imaginary observatory: as Ville-Marie expands, other settlements appear simultaneously at various points on the island and in the neighbouring plain, and all

seem to mesh into an overall preconceived plan. What did happen?

A study of the particular set of contingencies leading to the colonization of the Montreal Basin will clarify the matter. At a time when the fur trade became one of the most important economic resources of the continent, Montreal's geographical location made it a natural controlling centre for the trade. It became the rival of other European colonies competing for the monopoly. Moreover its command over the river network opened the way for the colonization of America's interior by the French. The great exploration by Jolliet, Marquette, Cavalier de La Salle and others, were stimulated by the necessity to discover new fur territories. They tended to centre the French empire on the St. Lawrence and the Mississippi and deny the other European colonies on the Atlantic Coast the right to expand beyond the Appalachians.

The first to react were the Dutch settlers of New Amsterdam and Fort Orange. They would later be dislodged from these towns by the British, who would later re-name the towns New York and Albany. One of the forts was located at the mouth of the Hudson River, and the other at the confluent of the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers. They controlled the penetration road into the continent which cut into the St. Lawrence Basin and separated Montreal from its natural hinterland.

This was a very real menace, for the economy of the Atlantic colonies was more diversified than that of the French, and their inland network of natural communications did not extend as deeply as the St. Lawrence.⁴ Moreover, rival colonies used to form alliances with the various Indian nations to carry on the fur trade.

Indians were indispensable allies in the fur trade. As natives, familiar with the New World environment, they knew the habits and habitats of the animals. They knew how to catch them and how to transport the pelts in their frail boats over tumultuous rivers. Besides, they were not demanding; they gave a great deal in exchange for very little. Yet, to the Indians, this kind of trade with the white man was more than a paying proposition: it was vital.

Firstly, the fur trade required but few agents; this maintained the hunting grounds intact and fostered the respect for the integrity of the vital environment of the natives. Secondly, the natives acquired metal tools and weapons in exchange for the pelts. Indeed, the North American Indians had not yet reached the iron age. They used to make implements out of wood, bone, stone and sometimes out of copper. Iron was a revelation, a revolution in their way of life. Europeans became "The Men of Iron". Their arrival with cauldrons, knives and muskets made of iron upset the primitive culture. With the

trading of metal implements for pelts, life for the Indians changed radically. Weapons and tools made of metal would increase their strength and natural skills. Relationship between the various Indian nations would be particularly affected, depending upon which nation had or did not have metal weapons and tools. It soon became a matter of survival: the Hurons were exterminated because the French had not supplied them with guns, whereas their ennemy, the Iroquois, had received guns from the British and the Dutch.⁵

Thus, two European colonies had settled in two different regions and the economic territory of one colony became an obstacle for the other's expansion. Both formed alliances with different Indian nations in order to secure for themselves the monopoly over the fur trade. The French formed alliances with the Hurons and the Algonquins of the Great Lakes region, who were the Iroquois' traditional enemies. The latter were grouped into a league of five nations spread over the fertile land stretching from Lake Champlain to Lake Ontario, and their territory extended from the English settlement to the fur territories. They became the natural allies of these colonies and were granted better exchange rates, including brandy and muskets. They were politically organized and more advanced socially than their opponents; they were sedentary and lived in fortified villages and cultivated the soil. They

were fierce warriors and started an economic war to secure the fur trade monopoly for the whites of Orange and New Amsterdam.⁶

Their main objective for more than half a century, from 1641 to 1701, was to destroy the land of the Hurons, thus depriving the French of helpers and forcing them to evacuate their trading posts on the St. Lawrence. They wanted to clear the Island of Montreal of all settlers, thus eliminating their control over the fur trade. It is within this very context of resistance against foreign invasion that the land was settled and the Island of Montreal colonized.⁷ These important contingencies were to influence the first settlement in a significant manner.

2. The Bulwark of the Colony

New France was populated under the impetus of the seignorial system. Entrepreneurs, who were called seignors or lords, were granted portions of land, with the express obligations of establishing colonists or vassals on their land. This system, administered since 1663 under the common law of Paris, had inherited the rights, the vocabulary, and a little of the spirit of feudalism, but resembled the latter only outwardly. In New France, it was essentially an economic system for the development of the land through which the government maintained a vigilant eye on the rights and duties of all parties concerned.⁸

This system would have scarcely worked under the rule of the trading companies; they were more interested in a colony of traders. Yet, when war broke out against the aborigines, the underpopulated colony took its toll. For the economic life of the colony was entirely dependent on the fur trade, and this trade was only possible if the waterways to the interior of the continent were sufficiently protected to ensure the freedom of traffic.⁹

Confronted with this failure, Colbert reorganized the colony in 1663 and placed it under the direct control and authority of the King. New France thus became an ordinary French province, governed by royal functionaries, among whom the Governor, the Intendant and the Bishop became the main figures. Furthermore, in order to passify the natives, Louis XIV dispatched to the colony the Carignan Salières Regiment which was composed of a thousand hardy soldiers who had previously won fame in the battlefields of Europe. The army immediately set out to block the invasion road of the Iroquois and erected fortified posts on the Richelieu River, which was part of a network leading from New Amsterdam to Montreal via the Hudson River and Lake Champlain. In 1665, they built three forts on the Richelieu; Fort Richelieu at the mouth of the river, Fort St-Louis at the foot of the Richelieu Rapids (today's Chambly), and Fort Ste-Thérèse, three leagues upstream

from Fort St-Louis.¹⁰

At the same time, the first government Intendant, Jean-Baptiste Talon (1625?-1694) inaugurated his administration. His activity in New France would be of the utmost importance. As a career administrator who had proved himself as Intendant of Hainault in Flanders, he was the first to establish the colony on a solid economic foundation. He established a quasi-military plan for settling the land in order to protect the exposed regions of the country against the invasions of natives or foreigners. This is of particular relevance to our subject matter.

With this purpose in mind, Talon advised the King to keep the soldiers of the Carignan-Salières Regiment in the colony by granting them land ...

Cette manière de donner un pays nouvellement conquis, he explained, répond à l'usage autrefois reçu chez les Romains, de distribuer aux gens de guerre les champs des provinces subjuguées, qu'on appelait praedia militaria, & la pratique de ces peuples politiques & guerriers peut, à mon sentiment, être judicieusement introduite dans un pays éloigné de mille lieues de son Monarque, qui, à cause de cet éloignement, peut souvent être réduit à la nécessité de se soutenir par ses propres forces.¹¹

In his assessment of the location of the settlements, Talon

correctly judged that the most vulnerable region of the colony was the Montreal area and in particular the access road provided by the Richelieu Valley.

Some 25 officers of the Carignan-Salières Regiment, mostly captains and lieutenants, agreed to stay in New France and were granted seignories along the shores of the Richelieu and St. Lawrence rivers, from Montreal to Lake St-Pierre. The new seignors attracted to their land some of the discharged soldiers whom they had previously commanded. The number of the soldiers who became colonists on such military concessions is estimated at four to five hundred.¹²

Thus, for instance, Talon granted Monsieur de Sorel, Captain of the Carignan Regiment, Fort Richelieu, located at the mouth of the Richelieu River, together with an estate two and a half leagues wide by two leagues deep. According to the King's engineer, Gédéon de Catalogne, who, in 1712, wrote the remarkable Mémoire sur les plans des seigneuries et habitations des gouvernements de Québec, les Trois-Rivières et Montréal, the location of this seignory was "très belle et la plus convenable, et le seul entrepôt entre Montréal, les Trois-Rivières et Chambly"¹³. In time, the city of Sorel was to develop on this well-located estate. In order to better control the mouth of the Richelieu River, Monsieur de Berthier, Captain of a company of foot soldiers, was granted

an estate two leagues wide by two leagues deep, on the other side of the river across from Monsieur de Sorel's estate; this is now Berthierville. The plans for the defence of the Richelieu River included another strategic outpost, Fort St-Louis; Talon granted Fort St-Louis, with land on either side of the river, one league deep and six leagues running alongside the river, to Monsieur de Chambly, Captain of the troops. The town of Chambly originated on this estate.

Much land had already been granted on the left bank of the St. Lawrence River, between the Island of Montreal and Lake St-Pierre: amongst others, the Seignory of Lachenaie, Repentigny and St-Sulpice. Talon reinforced the settlements on this shore by granting the Sieur de la Valtrie a company lieutenant, an estate with one and a half leagues of frontage and the same depth. This seignory adjoined that of St-Sulpice and was but a few leagues upstream from Monsieur de Berthier's estate. Today, towns and villages located on these estates perpetuate the names of the legatees.

Familiar names may also be found amongst the towns and villages of the right bank all dating back to Talon's distribution of seignories. The Sieur de Contrecoeur, a captain from the Carignan regiment, received an estate two leagues wide by two leagues deep; his ensign, the Sieur de Verchères was granted an estate one league wide and of equal depth.

Monsieur de Varennes, a retired lieutenant from a company of the King's troops, received an estate on the river-front twenty-eight arpents wide and one and a half leagues deep. Monsieur Boucher, from whom the name Boucherville comes, received an estate on the river front, fourteen arpents wide and two leagues deep. Engineer de Catalogne remarked about this estate that this "coste pour ce qu'elle contient est une des plus belles et des plus unies du Canada; les habitans y sont les plus aisés du gouvernement"¹⁴. Charles Le Moyne's numerous services to the colony earned him all the land not yet granted along the right bank of the river from the previous Seignory to that of the Jésuites (La Prairie de la Magdeleine, granted in 1647). He named his domain Longueuil, a name he borrowed from his native Normandy. The following year, in 1673, he was granted another important estate, on Lake St-Louis, and he named it Chateaugay. Finally, Monsieur Perrot, then governor of Ville-Marie, received the island which still bears his name, while the Sieur de Berthelot was granted Ile Jésus.¹⁵

Both shores of the St. Lawrence, from Montreal to Lake St - Pierre and the shores of the Richelieu were distributed into fiefs which Intendant Talon granted during the month of October and November 1672. They were granted to soldiers "avec obligation pour eux de s'y établir, de les faire

cultiver & d'y attirer des colons, principalement les soldats licenciés qu'ils avaient eus sous leurs ordres"¹⁶. There is little doubt as to the intention of the systematic occupation of the land and to quote historian Faillon ...

l'une des fins que le Roi se proposait par ces concessions était de fortifier le pays contre les Iroquois; aussi est-il à remarquer que les fiefs nobles qu'il donna à ses officiers furent presque tous situés dans le voisinage de l'île de Montréal, & sur le bord des rivières par où les barbares avaient coutume de descendre, c'est-à-dire sur la rivière appelée de Richelieu, & sur le fleuve Saint-Laurent, à partir du lac Saint-Pierre.

Faillon adds that

s'y établissant avec un certain nombre de leurs soldats devenus agriculteurs, ils (the officers) donnèrent lieu à la formation de divers bourgs qui, avec Villemarie, furent la sûreté & comme le Boulevard du reste de la colonie Française.¹⁷

The policy of national defence through occupation of the land is of great importance for our subject matter. It marked the onset of the structuration of the great Montreal plain and was to determine the orientation of its future development.

Redoubts and fortifications were being built on the seignories. These fortifications offered safe refuge against the attack by the natives, and during troubled times their proximity encouraged colonists to settle down. They were

often erected near the seignorial domaines. The first chapels and churches, and sometimes town mills were built near the fortifications. Boucherville erected its first wooden redoubt in 1668, and its first church in 1670. A wooden fort was built near Laprairie in 1670 and a chapel around 1687. Varenne's first church was built in 1692 and the first wooden fort in the next year. In Contrecoeur, the seignorial house itself was used as a chapel until 1711, while in Sorel, the Richelieu fort of 1665 became a refuge and the first church was built in 1708. In Chambly, the chapel was incorporated into the fort when it was rebuilt in 1710.¹⁸ Longueuil is a most interesting case; from 1685 to 1690, Charles Le Moyne, the second seignor and first baron of Longueuil, had a remarkable stone fort built for himself and for the protection of his numerous settlers. The castle with its built-in church was located near the southwest corner of today's St. Charles Street and Chambly Road. It was two storeys high, with four turrets and was at least two hundred and ten feet (French measures) wide by one hundred and seventy feet deep. It was burned down in 1792 and was demolished in 1810. The Sieur Le Moyne had a flour mill and a brewery built near his fort, both of good stonework.¹⁹

The fort or the redoubt, the seignorial manoir, the church and the mills constituted the first cores of

community life in the seignories. In time, and in spite of the difficulties of colonization and the lack of interest of the settlers for clustered dwellings, several of these cores grew into larger settlements. Towards the end of French rule, Laprairie, Boucherville and Verchères, as if predestined by their very location, grew into villages with several hundred inhabitants, serving as parishes and trading centres for goods and services. The census of 1723 lists for Boucherville five bakeries, one general store, one wheat store, four wheat store-houses, and one smith shop²⁰. Around the same period (1760), Longueuil and Chambly, whose site has been chosen by the seignors for development as villages, were hamlets, with fewer dwellings and inhabitants and offering fewer services than the villages. This was not the last. Indeed, in the early 1830's, according to the Dictionnaire topographique de la province du Bas-Canada, by Joseph Bouchette, Longueuil and Chambly became larger villages, Longueuil with 65 houses, two schools and a splendid church, Chambly with almost one hundred houses and a "collège" with some 75 students.²¹ With its magnificent fort, built between 1709 and 1711 by the Chief Engineer of New France, Josué Boisberthelot de Beaucourt, Chambly was among the villages which best exemplified the genesis of such a centre. According to Bouchette, other centres like Berthier grew or were still growing into villages.

Roads soon linked the seignories, villages and hamlets. At the beginning, the location of roads was dictated by military objectives; as early as 1665, a road was built by the soldiers between Fort Ste-Thérèse and Fort St-Louis (Chambly) and later another road was built between Fort St-Louis and Montreal. The following year, the army built the fort of St - Jean on the Richelieu River (today's town of St - Jean) which would eventually be linked to Montreal. The purpose of such land communications was evident and engineer de Catalogne confirms this fact when he regrets the fact that the Baron de Longueuil failed to complete a road four and a half leagues long between his seignories and Chambly, "malgré la nécessité qu'il y avoit de le perfectionner afin de pouvoir secourir en peu de tems le fort de Chambly s'il estoit attaqué, au lieu que le secours, à le conduire par eau, doit faire 36 lieues"²². Soon, however, military objectives yielded to considerations of trade and convenience. Sorel and Laprairie were soon linked by a road joining the interjacent settlements along the St. Lawrence River. Sorel and Chambly were linked by a road on the left bank of the Richelieu River, with a sideroad going to Contrecoeur. Chambly was located on the main road between Montreal and the United States, a fact "qui occasionne beaucoup d'activité", to quote Joseph Bouchette.²³ On the left bank of the St. Lawrence River, Berthier, located between

Montreal and Three Rivers, enjoyed the same privileged position as Chambly: indeed the stagecoach run passed through the town.²⁴ From 1735 onwards, the road between Montreal and Quebec was fit for carriages; Voyer Lanouiller boasted that he travelled the distance in four days by coach.²⁵

"Linear villages" progressively appeared along the roadways and especially along the river. Buildings were close to each other, but not adjacent, and settlements dotted the road on several miles, sometimes reaching beyond the limits of their seignory. Thus, for instance, towards the end of French rule, the Seignories of L'Assomption and Saint-Sulpice, Terrebonne and Lachenaie were already linked by a ribbon of buildings; today, they still dot the landscape along the shores of the St. Lawrence River. Names like Sorel, Berthier, Chambly, Contrecoeur, Lavaltrie, Repentigny, Verchères, Varennes, Boucherville, Longueuil, Laprairie, Châteauguay, etc. are still familiar today. They are villages, municipalities and towns in the Montreal plain, and through their participation in the economic life of the Metropolis, they constitute its zone of regional influence. These settlements, as well as others, like St - Jean, Iberville, Beloeil, Beauharnois, Valleyfield, Ste-Thérèse, St-Jérôme, etc., which grew from later concessions, became urban satellites of the large city. From the first cores of social organization and community life in the

seignories, urban centres grew with two, five, ten, twenty, or thirty thousand inhabitants. They were linked by a road network laid out like a spider web, the material result of complex trade patterns originating in Montreal.

One may well wonder about today's physiognomy of the Montreal plain, had the seignorial system not existed and the need to defend the country not arisen. Some urban centres like Sorel, Chambly and Longueuil would have probably developed on, or almost on, the same location. Indeed, the seignorial system was not a political institution, but a purely economic system, apt to fulfil its rule inasmuch as it rested on sound geographical reality. The policy of Intendant Talon consisted in populating the nerve centres of the great natural routes of communication. It was therefore normal that more important centres should grow from some of these concessions; such urban centres would have probably appeared one way or another.

The significance of Talon's "military" plan for the development of the territorial system of Montreal lies in the fact that it shaped this development from the start and presided over the settlement of the plain. During the French Regime, colonists who were attracted by land concessions settled first along the natural routes of communication on both shores of the St. Lawrence, on part of the shores of the Ottawa River

and in the Richelieu Valley. Later on, the settlements expanded and gained in strength, while at the same time, British and Loyalist immigration boosted the population settled in the plain between the rivers.²⁶

Today's rural and urban landscapes are the permanent heritage of the regime of territorial organization and land distribution. For reasons of defence as well as of communication via the rivers, the seignories were on the whole narrow and deep, laid out perpendicular to the rivers. Along the St. Lawrence and Richelieu (up to St-Jean d'Yberville), the seignories were trapezoidal and extended from the northwest to the southeast. Inside the seignories, land was leased to the colonists. In most cases, the concessions resembled long narrow rectangles, running parallel to the lateral limits of the seignory, with measurements forming a ratio of 1:10. This pattern is not an exclusive feature of the seignorial system of the St. Lawrence River. It is also found in the French settlements of Illinois, of Louisiana and even in some localities of New England. Its origin probably dates back to the European Middle Ages, and, according to Professor Derruau, the pattern which the settlers of New France followed may be traced to the medieval system of clearing the land into streets: the region of France known as "La Perche" displays such patterns.²⁷ Whatever its origin, this manner of

subdividing the land into long, narrow strips, perpendicular to the rivers was particularly suitable for the St. Lawrence and Richelieu Valleys. As the St. Lawrence River was the most important communications route of the colony, this mode of distribution allowed for the spacing out of several farms along the river and its affluents. When the shores were fully settled, the same mode of subdivision of the land prevailed when settlements along the roads were granted. They formed units of population and basic agricultural structures called "strip farms". Such long strips of land allowed the farmers to enjoy privacy on their land while they remained close to their neighbours, an important feature, in a vast, sparsely populated country with a rigorous climate. Thus for instance, in order to keep the roads open during the long winter months, a farmer had only to keep his section of the road clear of snow over a distance equal to the width of his land.²⁸

The rural landscape of the Montreal plain was to retain the same appearance to this day, with hundreds of narrow parallel strips of land. Their boundaries are often marked by hedges, parallel rows of trees and thickets, the rigorous lay-out of which is typical and rather interesting. In time, this mode of subdivision would also result in the development of linear villages, which are still characteristic of the plain; it was also to constitute the framework within

which the massive development of housing would take place during urban growth in the twentieth century. The features of urban development on the Island of Montreal attest to this fact, as we turn our attention to the first settlement of the island.

3. The villages on the island

The island of Montreal was the key to the waterways and could not be left out of the overall plan for the defence of the colony. The island had been granted as a seignory in 1663 to the gentlemen of the "Séminaire de St-Sulpice" in Paris and it was one of the largest (some 36 miles long and seven miles wide) as well as one of the most beautiful concessions in New France. Fort Ville-Marie was built on one of the island's shores, on a location where the Saint-Pierre River flowed into the St. Lawrence River. It was the first European establishment and the embryo of today's metropolis.

In order to protect this advanced post of European civilization in America against attacks by the natives, the seignors of the island decided in 1671 to create noble fiefs in certain parts of their huge domain. These remote fiefs were like small seignories within the larger seignorie and the seignors were under obligation to build fortified residences, to live there and to attract colonists. The immediate goal of this operation was obviously to occupy

vulnerable and strategic spots on the island in order to defend it.²⁹

One such vulnerable spot was the lower island, at the confluent of the St. Lawrence and the Rivière-des-Prairies. The Sieur Picoté de Belestre was granted the concession on July 28. A wooden fort was built at Pointe-aux-Trembles as early as 1675³⁰; a windmill followed in 1677³¹ and in 1678 a church opened its doors. It was Montreal's first church outside the town itself.³² In order to better fortify the tip of the island on the side of Rivière-des-Prairies and to block the entrance to the Assomption River, two adjacent fiefs were created on December 7, 1671, by Dollier de Casson, who, as director of the seminary of St-Sulpice of Montreal, was then seigneur of the island. They measured two hundred arpents each and were granted to Carion du Fresnoy and Paul de Morel, both military men. Early in 1672, other smaller concessions were granted to reinforce the two fiefs. A wooden redoubt and a windmill were built in 1688 on today's Rivière-des-Prairies' territory, and parish registers appeared around the same date.³³ Finally, in 1671, Monsieur Zacharie du Puy, then major of the Island of Montreal, was granted a noble fief of some three hundred and twenty arpents near Sault St-Louis; it was named Verdun, a name which remained with the municipality to this day. A wooden fort appears to have

been built there in 1662.³⁴

The creation of these fiefs, including that of Lachine, which existed since 1667, enabled the northern tip of the island as well as the approaches to Sault St-Louis to take care of their own defence. The other end of the island, Bout de l'Isle, projecting into Lake St-Louis and into the Lake of Two Mountains, was still to be protected.

Demand for land on Bout de l'Isle was strong, as it was the landing place for the natives who came down the Ottawa River to trade furs. Dollier de Casson took advantage of this trend and created four noble fiefs on the Bout de l'Isle. The first measured two hundred arpents and was located on the shores of the Lake of Two Mountains and was granted to the Sieur de Boisbriant, a captain in the Carignan Regiment. Later on, as it changed hands, this fief was named Senneville, a name which has been retained to this day. A stone fort was built there in 1692. An adjacent fief was granted on April 12, 1672 to Charles d'Ailleboust des Musseaux. On July 30 of the same year, Dollier granted a four hundred arpents fief in the neighborhood to the two de Bertet brothers. They called it Belle-Vue; a wooden redoubt was built in 1683 and a first chapel in 1686. Finally, Mr. Claude Robutel de Saint-André inherited the fourth fief of some two hundred arpents, it was adjacent to the previous one. Historian Faillon confirmed

that "en érigeant ainsi les fiefs que nous venons d'énumérer & en les donnant en toute propriété à des militaires, les seigneurs de Montréal faisaient ce qui était en leur pouvoir pour protéger les colons & mettre l'île en état de se défendre..."³⁵.

1671 and 1672 are important years in the genesis of the structure of today's Metropolis. The establishment of noble fiefs along the left bank of the St. Lawrence, from Pointe-aux-Trembles to Bout de l'Isle did not by itself determine the development of human settlements along this axis, as the shores of the large waterway were a natural location for a settlement. Nevertheless, it did make such developments possible by creating a system of defence and refuges for the local inhabitants. The creation of parishes are a good indication of the evolution of settlements, as parishes depended on the community to support the expenses of the cult. The first parishes established on the Island of Montreal, beside the town's own parish (1642), were L'Enfant-Jésus in Pointe-aux-Trembles (1674), Les Saints-Anges in Lachine (1676), St-Joseph in Rivières-des-Prairies (1687), and Ste-Anne at Bout-de-l'Isle (1703). Others would appear later; St - Joachim in Pointe-Claire in 1713, St - Laurent in 1720, St - François d'Assise in Longue-Pointe in 1722, La Visitation in Sault-au-Récollet in 1736 and finally Sainte-Geneviève in 1741.³⁶ (Pl. 5)

There seems to be a direct link between the foundation of the first parishes on the island and the settlement of the land which the fiefs and forts made possible. With the exception of the parish of St -Laurent, the first chapels and churches were built close to the fortifications. Pointe-aux-Trembles is typical as one may gather from reading the census of 1731 on the seignory of the Island of Montreal

qu'au dessus de la terre de l'Eglise et la joignant est un terrain Cent toises de front sur environ quatre-vingt-dix toises de profondeur, sur lequel est construit le fort dud. Lieu de la pointe aux trembles, clos de pieux, flanqué et bastionné et dans lequel est construit en maçonnerie la d(ite) Eglise de l'Enfant Jésus...³⁷

Villages grew on the island of Montreal from the smaller ambryonic communities as they had grown elsewhere in the Montreal plain. Thus for instance, according to the "Aveu et dénombrement" of 1731, part of the land of the fort of Pointe-aux-Trembles was subdivided "en Emplacements distribués par Rues en forme de Bourg"; at Rivière-des-Prairies, "est un village commencé d'un arpent en superficie appartenant auxd. seigneurs..."³⁸. At the end of the French regime, the territory of Pointe-aux-Trembles did in fact contain a compact village, with the same name, which served as a parish centre and as a service centre for the inhabitants of that end of the

island.³⁹ Gédéon de Catalogne adds that the inhabitants were very industrious and well off.⁴⁰ Pointe-Claire was a hamlet and was not as large as the previous settlement, but the parish nevertheless served 800 parishioners (1765)⁴¹. Other settlements on the island would probably have reached the status of village or hamlet had they not been destroyed by natives and had their development not been hampered. Indeed, with reference to the Parish of Lachine, Catalogne points out in his "Mémoire sur les plans des seigneuries et habitations des gouvernements de Québec, des Trois-Rivières et de Montréal", that

les habitans y estoient autre fois fort à leur aise par le commerce qu'ils faisoient avec les sauvages, qui y abordoient en descendant à Montréal. Mais depuis la désolation que les Iroquois y portèrent en 1689, qui brûlèrent les maisons et emmenèrent la plus part des habitans captifs, elle a dégénéré en tout.⁴²

And about the Parish of Rivière-des-Prairies, he writes:

"les Iroquois, pour avoir détruit la plus part des habitans, ont causé du retardement à son établissement"⁴³.

However, better days were ahead. Joseph Bouchette in 1815 tells us that "La Chine est le village le plus important de toute l'île, en ce qu'il est le centre de tout le commerce entre la haute et la basse province, aussi bien qu'avec le pays du nord-ouest". About Pointe-Claire, he states that the village "contient de 90 à 100 maisons, bâties



régulièrement, et formant de petites rues qui coupent la grande route à angles droits"⁴⁴. In his Dictionnaire topographique, published 15 years later, the same Bouchette described St - Laurent, Ste-Geneviève, Sault-au-Récollet and Rivière-des-Pariries, as well established and organized parishes and villages.⁴⁵

The creation of fortified fiefs was to promote the construction of the island's first road network. In order to make the various fortifications of the defence system as quickly accessible as possible, they were linked to one another all along the shores, by a network of trails and paths starting at Fort Senneville and going through the fortifications of Ste-Anne, Pointe-Claire, Roland, St - Rémi, Lachine, Ville-Marie, Longue-Pointe, and Pointe-aux-Trembles to the redoubts of Rivière-des-Prairies. Thus originated the road around the island. This continuous road probably became the "Chemin du Roy" for the "côtes" like St- Martin, St - François, Ste-Anne and St - Jean between Ville-Marie and Pointe-aux-Trembles.

In time, this first road network would be reinforced and extended as some of the fortifications evolved into villages and parish centres. An analysis of historical maps and of Beaugrand and Morin's reconstitutions⁴⁶ tend to reveal that before the end of the French Regime, the rimroad was completed on the Rivière-des-Prairies' side, and that the town

of Montreal was directly connected to Lachine, St - Laurent and Sault-au-Récollet. The latter roads later became St. James Road, St - Joseph Boulevard (Montreal-Lachine), Guy Street and Côte-des-Neiges Road (Montreal-St - Laurent) and probably St. Lawrence Boulevard (Montreal-Sault-au-Récollet). Likewise, paths or roads crossed the island from Pointe-Claire to Ste-Geneviève, and from Pointe-aux-Trembles to St - Joseph of Rivière-des-Prairies.

Thus, from the outset, both on the island and in the great plain of Montreal, a particular set of contingencies during colonization determined the manner in which the island was to be settled and presided over the territory's first structuration. Such structures would have long range effects on urban developments, but for the time being we would briefly turn our attention to the study of the "côtes" of the island.

4. The "Côtes" of the Island

The "côte" played an important part in the development of the urban environment and of the townscape of Montreal, as well as in the genesis of the orthogonal grid of streets. Few researchers have been interested by this reality, and the original significance of the "côte" seems almost lost today. It is all too often connected to paths or roads; Côte-des-Neiges Road or Côte Ste-Catherine Road are noticeable for

their steep gradients and the word "côte" is presumed to be synonymous with "slope" ... this is confirmed by both the Larousse dictionary and the Robert dictionary. Yet the "côte" in Montreal and in Quebec has nothing to do with gradients. Indeed, regions as flat and as even as Côte-de-Liesse and Côte-Vertu were originally called "côte" like Côte Ste-Catherine and Côte-des-Neiges. The "côte" is essentially a definite organic unit of territory and is perhaps synonymous with "neighborhood", to quote Arthur Lower.⁴⁷

On the Island of Montreal as well as elsewhere in New France, the "côte" designated the rows of farmland drawn perpendicularly, or almost perpendicularly, to the river shores. When the banks were settled, a second row or "côte" was created and was linked with the first one by a road called a "montée", (hill road). A third, a fourth, a fifth row of farmland followed in the same manner. In time, the word "côte" was replaced by the word "rang" or range. The "côte" or range is thus an alignment of farmland settled by colonists living side by side on narrow but long individual strips, facing a road or a river, or both. The "côte" or range constituted in fact the basic territorial unit responsible for social cohesion. Its spacial delineation tended to arouse the colonist's feeling of identification with a definite territory and of belonging to a specific human community.⁴⁸

On the island of Montreal, these characteristics seemed even more remarkable than elsewhere. In other seignories, "côtes" were created according to a continuous process of land occupation, starting at the river and progressing inward. In the huge seignory of Montreal, several "côtes" were first created here and there as autonomous entities in order to improve the most suitable areas. The "côte" was best suited for this purpose. Indeed, its predetermined area allowed for accidents of natural topography, such as in areas adjacent to Mount Royal. Moreover, it fostered the social cohesion required for the improvement and defence of an individually and collectively identifiable heritage.

A splendid terrier, dated October 15, 1702, is, according to Trudel⁴⁹, the only cartographical document yielding statistics on the population of the seignories on the island of Montreal at the beginning of the eighteenth century. It bears the lovely title of Description générale de l'isle de Montréal Divisée par costes où sont Exactement marquées toutes les distances de place en place, les noms de chaque habitant, la quantité de terre qu'ils possèdent tant de front que de profondeur, les forts, Eglises et Moulins le tout de suite avec le Meilleur Ordre que l'on a peu, and gives us a good idea of the spirit which presided over the creation of the "côtes" on the island and describes their features. The first

"côtes" were located on the shores of the St. Lawrence River and of Rivière-des-Prairies, where concessions were divided into long, narrow strips perpendicular to the river. The same holds true for the "côtes" located between Ville-Marie and Pointe-aux-Trembles, like Côte St - Martin, Côte St - François, Côte Ste-Anne, Côte St - Jean, as well as Côte St - Dominique on the Rivière-des-Prairies side. The concept of "côte" did not apply solely to the banks of the river. From the map of 1702, we learn that several types of "côtes" were created inside the seignories. The first kind is very much like the "côte" on the shore. Côte St - Pierre and Côte St - Paul were located on either side of Lake St - Pierre (where Lachine canal was to be built); the strips of land of Côte St - Joseph and Côte Ste-Catherine were located perpendicularly to a road. (Pl. 2)

The most typical "côte" in the Montreal area is the "Côte Double", consisting of two rows of farmland located on either side of a central common. The common was shared by the community of colonists, usually for cattle grazing. A public road, usually called "chemin du roy" (Kingsway), ran through the common. This kind of "côte" is indicated in a very descriptive manner on the 1702 map. Côte Notre-Dame-des-Neiges, Côte Notre-Dame-des-Vertus, Côte St-Laurent and Côte St-Michel were of that type. The Aveu et dénombrement of 1731 gives an almost identical description for each of these "côtes

doubles". The following is a description of "côte" St-Michel:
 "Que dans l'Etendue de la d(ite) Coste St-Michel partagée en
 deux Rangs d'habitans par une commune de deux arpens de large
 au milieu de laquelle il y a un chemin de Roy qui court Nord'
 est et sud'ouest..."⁵⁰.

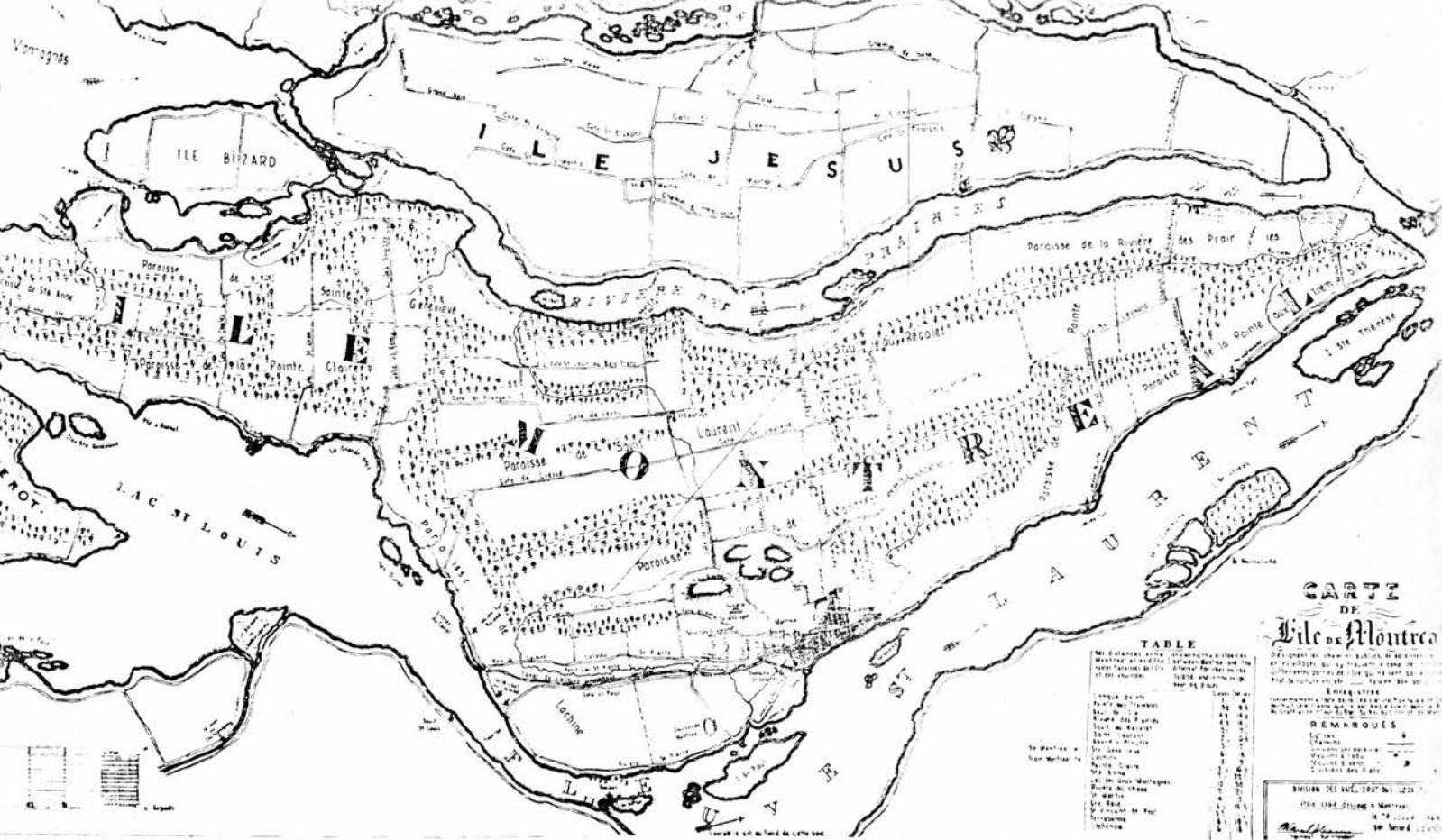
Côte Notre-Dame-des-Neiges, Côte Notre-Dame-des-Vertus, Côte St-Laurent and Côte St-Michel, were at that time homogenous, autonomous territorial areas which were not contiguous. Thus, for instance, Côte St-Laurent and Côte St-Michel were separated by wide strips of land which had not yet been granted. This tends to confirm that the "côte" constituted a self-sufficient predetermined territorial unit. The "côte" seems to have been an important element within the island's defence system. Indeed, this terrier dates back to about one year after the signature of the great peace signed with the natives; this implies that most of the "côtes" depicted on the terrier must have been created before the end of the hostilities.

Thus, the côte appeared as the most elementary and most homogeneous unit of the territorial system of Montreal; it constituted the basis of territorial organization of the human community, while the parish, which usually encompassed several "côtes", constituted a basic unit of civil and social organization. This is obvious from Gédéon de

Catalogne's Mémoire (1712). He reports that the seignory of Montreal "est divisée en six paroisses, sçavoir, Montréal, La Chine, Haute de l'Isle, la Pointe au Tremble, la Rivière des Prairies et la Mission du Sault au Récollet"⁵¹. In his description of the Parish of Montreal, he noted that to the latter "dépendent les habitans le long du fleuve, depuis Verdun jusques à la Longue Pointe; en outre la moitié des Costes St-Pierre et St-Paul, les costes de Nostre Dame des Neiges, de Liesse, des Vertues, St-Laurent, Ste-Catherine et St-Michel et la Visitation"⁵². He also mentioned the "Paroisse de la Pointe au Tremble d'où dépend la coste St-Lionnard..."⁵³.

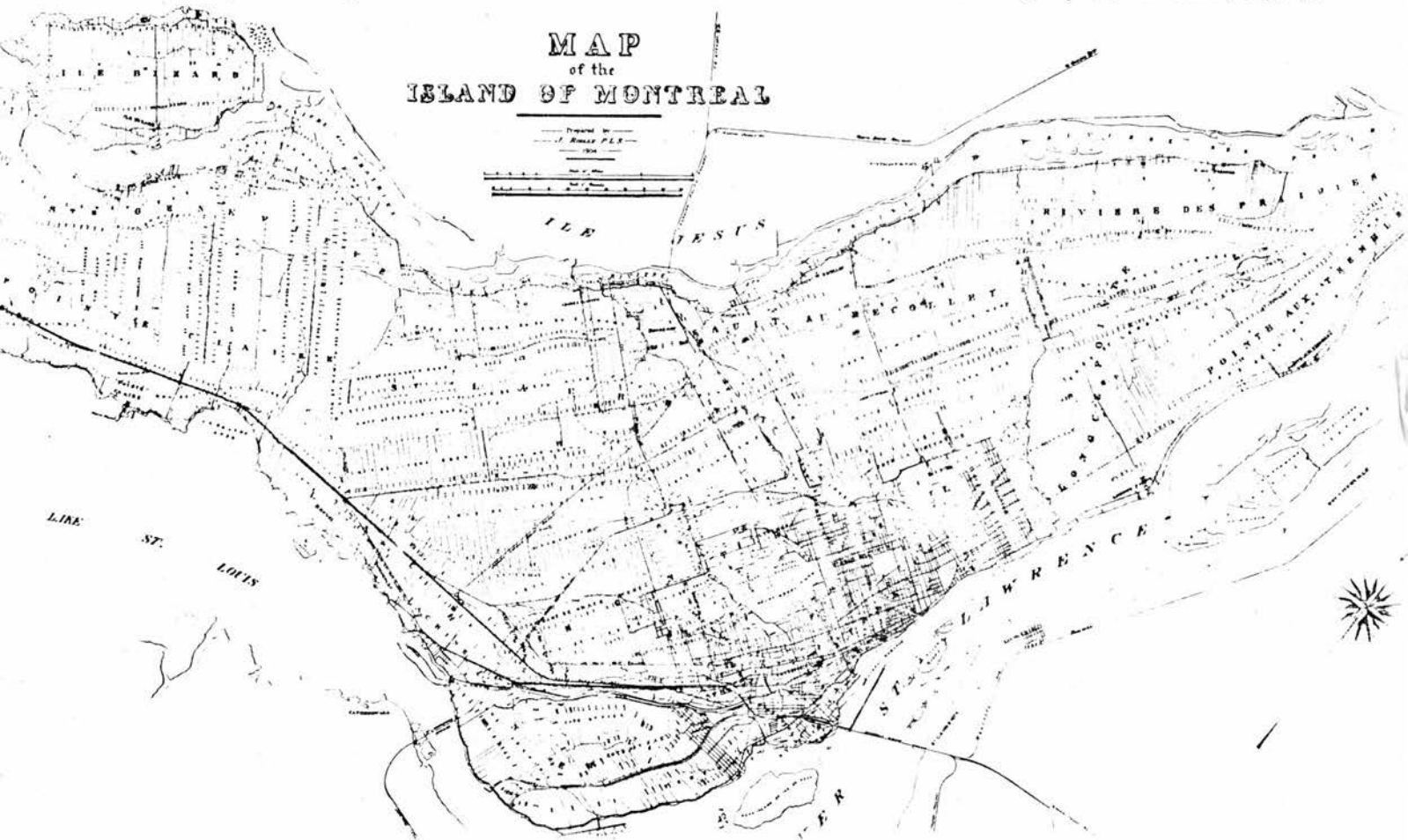
It would take too long to retrace the genesis of each one of the "côtes" which eventually covered the whole territory of the Island of Montreal, as may be gathered from a map drawn in 1834 by Jobin⁵⁴. The example of Côte Notre-Dame-des-Neiges was located in the heart of the island and is a good example of a strong neighbourhood unit and of an inland "côte double". It is also one of the oldest on the island. (Pl. 3)

We owe the creation of Côte Notre-Dame-des-Neiges to Dollier de Casson. He played an important part in the early development of the island, and in the course of the following chapters, we shall have more opportunity to learn about the man and his work. The site chosen for the establishment of



3. Map of the island of Montreal, drawn in 1834 by A. Jobin.

4. The system of "côtes" on the island of Montreal. Map by J. Rielle, 1904.



this "côte" was a succession of beautiful terraces on the northwest side of Mount Royal amidst which creek ran down from its source in the mountain and emptied into the Rivière-des-Prairies. The site was beautiful and rich in resources. The soil was ideal for vegetable farming and the ground yielded good building stones. The fast waters of the creek could be used to activate sawmills and flourmills. Various kinds of trees grew in abundance in the area, among which cedar and ash could provide small industries with raw materials.

In the spring of 1698, Catalogne, the King's Engineer, was asked by de Casson to subdivide this area into concessions for the colonists. Catalogne chose the creek as the dividing line for the "double côte", created a common on this axis and drew the outline for a byway. The Aveu et dénombrement of 1731 informs us that the common was two arpents wide and that the Kingsway ran in the middle of it from the southeast to the northwest.⁵⁵ He then subdivided the land into strips perpendicular to the creek and the common; twenty-one strips had an area of 40 arpents, with two arpents of frontage on the common and a depth of twenty arpents. The same 1:10 ratio to which we have alluded before prevailed here as in other concessions and with the same advantages: shared use of the equipment and a close community life. Thus, Côte Notre-Dame-des-Neiges was established as a definite territorial

unit of 37 separate strips of land with predetermined boundaries. The colonist who was granted a strip of land undertook to build a permanent dwelling on it as soon as possible, to maintain the stretch of the common road fronting on his lot, and to have his wheat ground at the common mill.⁵⁶

Côte Notre-Dame-des-Neiges is a very apt example, for it shows how the "côte" constituted an organic unit, capable of adaptation to the natural contours of topography, while remaining both homogeneous and autonomous. The concessions on the Island of Montreal usually lay from the southeast to the northwest, as they were located either on the shores or perpendicular to roads running roughly parallel to the rivers.⁵⁷ On Côte Notre-Dame-des-Neiges, however, the concessions ran in the opposite direction, i.e., southwest to northwest, this direction being determined by the creek which irrigated the terraces of that territory. Another fact that comes to light from an analysis of Côte Notre-Dame-des-Neiges is the social cohesion among residents who belonged to an identifiable territory. For over one hundred years a large number of its inhabitants had been tanners and curriers, and leather dressing was the Côte's main industry. Until the end of the nineteenth century, Côte Notre-Dame-des-Neiges was often called "le village des tanneurs". According to Jacques Godbout, in spite of a complete change of its function in today's society,

"Côte-des-Neiges est à Montréal un des rares quartiers qui soit une entité vivante, identifiée et facilement cernable."⁵⁸(Fig. 5)

5. The Influence of Rural Structures

From what we have established thus far, the territorial organization of the seignory of the Island of Montreal, from the very beginning, seems to have fostered the establishment of two basic types of habitats: clustered dwellings, and spaced out dwellings. The clustered habitat originated with Ville-Marie and with the embryos of social organization developing around the fortifications and parish churches. In time, most of these cores would develop into more compact settlements and become the main villages on the island; Longue-Pointe, Pointe-aux-Trembles, Rivière-des-Prairies, Sault-au-Récollet, Ste-Geneviève, Pointe-Claire, Lachine and St-Laurent. On the other hand, the "côte" constituted the sole basic model for spaced out dwellings in the organization of the rural territory of the island.

As we have seen earlier, land communications were soon established between the villages, trading posts and parishes and constituted the island's first road network. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, a secondary road network was linking the Kingsways with the primary network. The two networks were well integrated and constituted a balanced and well organized system of land communications as may be gathered

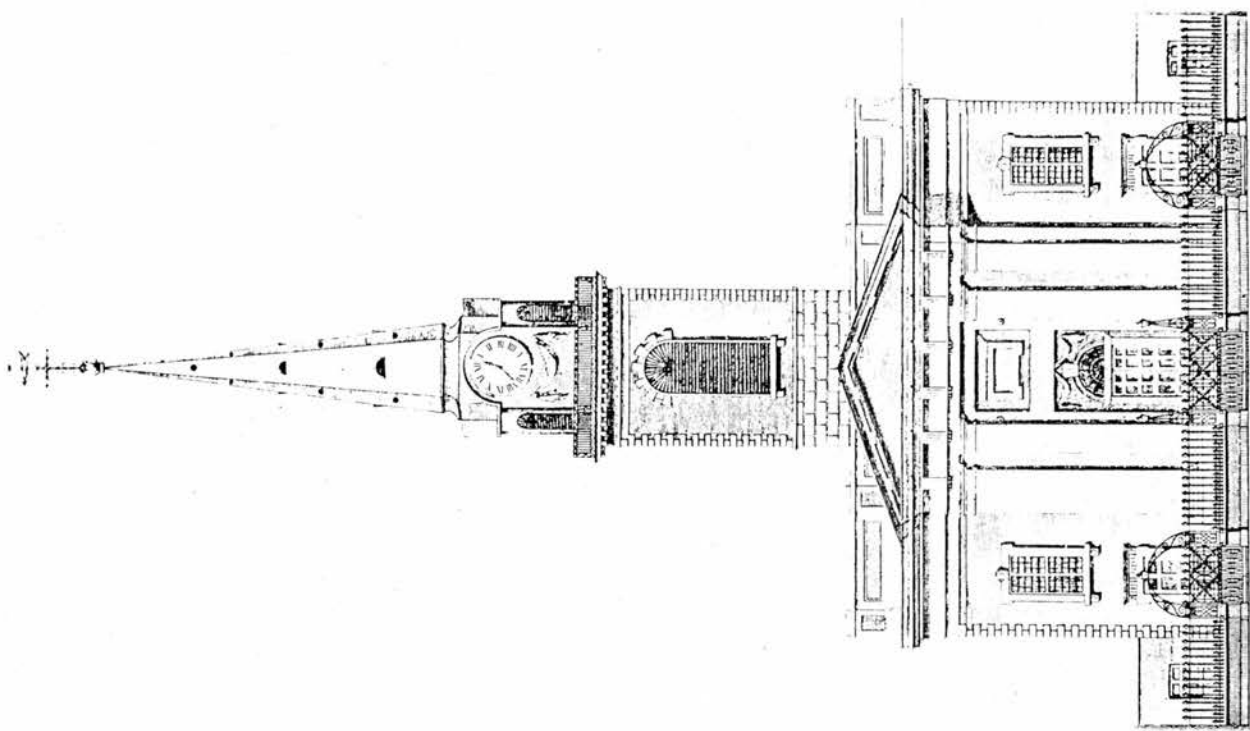
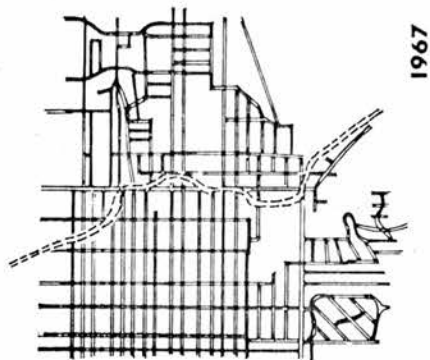
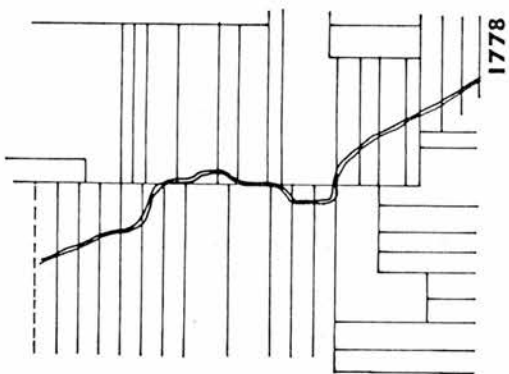
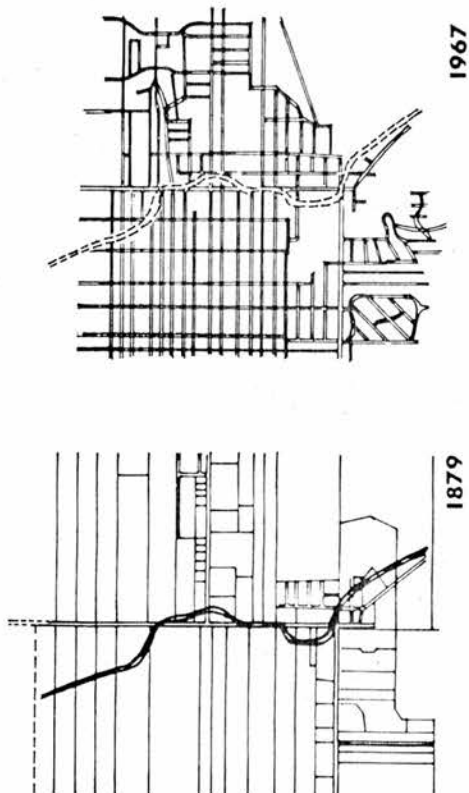
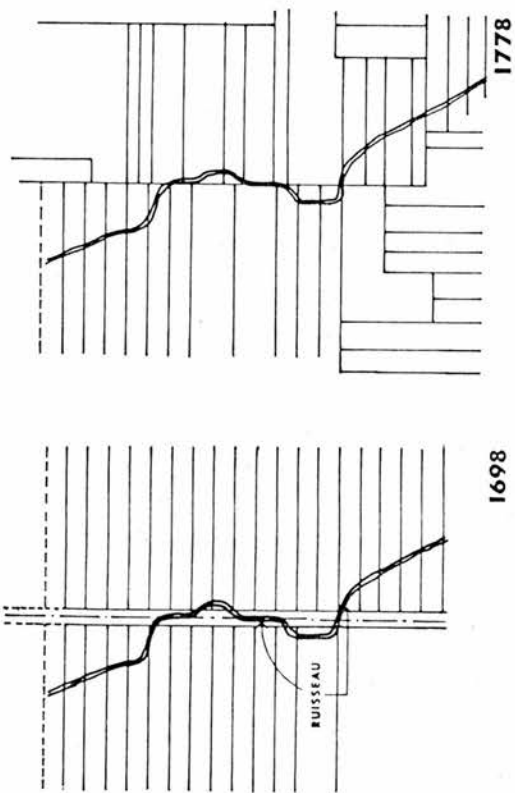


Fig. 5 Evolution of Côte Notre-Dame-des-Neiges.

Fig. 6 The first Anglican cathedral: Christ Church.
William Berczy, arch., 1805-21.

from an analysis of Jobin's map of 1834. Moreover, today's roads are still largely patterned after this original network.

Thus, the outline of the circular road around the island had changed little since earlier days. Between Pointe-aux-Trembles and boulevard Décarie, our Metropolitan Boulevard, the first expressway of the Metropolis, superposes itself on the old Kingsway of the "côtes" St-Léonard, St-Michel and St-Laurent. Between boulevard Décarie and Bout-de-l'Isle, the Trans-Canadian Expressway (an extension of the Metropolitan Expressway) steers away from the old byways of Côte Notre-Dame-des-Neiges and St-François, but further west it veers closer to the old Kingsway of Petite and Grande Côte Ste-Marie. As for the Côte de Liesse Expressway, it lies exactly on top of the old Kingsway of the Côte.

The origin of several arteries crossing the island could be traced in this manner. They date back to the old Kingsways of specific "côtes" or to connecting roads or "montées" linking the various "côtes" together or to the circular rimroads. A few examples should suffice: Côte-des-Neiges Road is one, and Côte Vertu is another. In the East End, the Rivière-des-Prairies Boulevard and Broadway were built on top of two old roads, linking Côte St-Léonard to the village of Rivière-des-Prairies and to the village of Pointe-aux-Trembles. Likewise, the origin of Boulevard St-Michel dates

back to a connecting road between Côte de la Visitation (today's Rosemont territory) and Côte St-Michel, which also connected these territories to the circular road, somewhere near Sault-au-Récollet. On the west side of the islands, there are three successive "montées", Montée des Sources, Montée St-Jean, and Montée St-Charles. These roads run across the island and correspond exactly to three distinct "côtes": Côtes des Sources, St-Jean and St-Charles. Together with Côte Notre-Dame-des-Neiges, these three "côtes" were the only "côtes" on the island whose concessions were oriented in direction opposite to that of the other "côtes" of the seignory, probably because of some features of local topography. This explains the orientation of the present "montées".

The balance between clustered and spaced out dwellings on the island seems to reflect the remarkable organization of the system; the "côte" constituted the basic unit of territorial organization, the parish constituted the core of social and civil organization, and both operated within the framework of the seignorial organization.⁵⁹ Yet, this human eco-system was to prove vulnerable to the economic and technological revolution of the nineteenth century. The advent of telegraph, steam navigation and the railways would polarize economic activities in Montreal and determine the pace of the city's industrialization; it heralded the onset of the modern

process of migration to the city: the ancient equilibrium soon broke down. Indeed, from the second half of the nineteenth century onward, the city of Montreal no longer appears as a relatively stable urban entity linked with others and standing out against a background of rural scenery, but it projects the image of a dense agglomeration of people in search of employment in the budding industry. The city was henceforth launched on a source of frenzied, unplanned development.

Today, the old villages on the island, originally created as autonomous and identifiable entities, with residents who enjoyed the feeling of belonging to distinctive human communities, are slowly being swallowed by the urban tide. Lachine, Longue-Pointe and Pointe-aux-Trembles, were located on the very axis of a growing heavy industry and were quickly absorbed. Other villages like St-Laurent, Sault-au-Récollet and Pointe-Claire, remnants of some older structures and of a somewhat tighter pattern of habitation are reminiscent of their origin. Thus far (and for how long?), only Rivière-des-Prairies, Ste-Geneviève and Ste-Anne have managed, to an extent, to escape the levelling action of the Metropolitan magma and to retain a certain character.

When they were created, the "côtes" gave their inhabitants a feeling of belonging to a distinct community and territorial unit. Yet, they were to suffer a comparable demise,

with important consequences for the city. Indeed, this rural structuration of the territory is at the origin of our orthogonal grid of streets. At a time of rapid and uncontrolled urban growth, vested interests unavoidably perpetuated the old subdivision of land down to the street patterns. Demographic as well as economic pressures forced the subdivision of the individual parcels of land of the "côtes" into building lots and in order to preserve acquired rights, streets were laid out to follow rigorously the original boundaries between the strips of land. A simple superimposition of a contemporary map of Montreal on a map of the island dating back to 1830 or 1850, and showing the "côtes" with their individual parcels, would prove this assertion. The typical street patterns of Greater Montreal follow closely the patterns of subdivision of the land into concessions from the original "côtes", except for certain specific planned urban developments like Town of Mount Royal, Ville St-Léonard and Hampstead.

It is important to realize that the simple geometrical lines of a "côte", based on straight lines and right angles, were well suited for urban structures. To quote urbanist Blumenfield:

The right angle and the straight line, convenient for the division of land, are equally convenient for the erection of buildings, for the laying of pipes and rail, and for

the regulation of traffic lights...
simple geometric forms have justified themselves as a permanent framework for varying functions.⁶⁰

Thus, the "côte", which used to have a stabilizing influence on the rural landscape, was to become a powerful factor of uniformity in urban development. The old populous districts of Montreal owe their strong gregarious and egalitarian character to the perpetuation of the structures of the "côte". Its influence would even be felt in the shaping and spacing out of green spaces. Except for Mount Royal and de Maisonneuve Parks, there are no large public parks in Montreal, but there is a proliferation of smaller green spaces, most of them square or rectangular in shape and traced after the same typical street pattern. Originally, most of Montreal's territory had been subdivided into individual parcels of similar shape, and occasionally some of these concessions have been handed down to us as undeveloped green spaces.

Another heritage from the rural "côte" or urban domain is the "city block". A block is an identifiable urban area; it is a definite homogeneous and monolithic mass. Blocks are typical of Montreal and usually correspond to the territories or part of the territories of the old "côtes". Thus for instance, Côte-des-Neiges constitutes an identifiable block if only because the orientation of its streets does not follow

the general orientation of the orthogonal pattern of the Metropolis, but rather the orientation dictated by the old subdivision of the "côte". Finally, to the rural "côte", and this in spite of its geometrical rigor, we owe the few irregularly traced arteries of today. Such roads usually correspond to the old Kingsway of individual "côtes", roads which followed the contours of natural topography. Such is the case of Côte Ste-Catherine Road, and rue des Carrières; the latter corresponds in part to the byway of the old Côte de la Visitation. Such is also the case with Côte St-Antoine Road, Côte St-Luc Road and with St. James Street which leads to Lachine and which traces its origin to the Kingsway of the very ancient Côte St-Pierre. From this brief analysis, it appears that both the regularity and irregularity of the typical grid of streets which developed from the second half of the nineteenth century onward, find their origin in the perpetuation of the old rural structures of the island's "côte". (Pl. 4 & 6)

Thus, the claim that Montreal is a typically American city because of the regularity and uniformity of the orthogonal grid of streets is both correct and incorrect. The claim is incorrect, if, by American-type grid of street, is meant a rigorously geometrical pattern like the one imposed in New York City by the city Commissioners in 1811, or in San Francisco or in several other cities. Indeed, in Montreal,

the development of the grid was never the result of an imposed will or of conscious planning. It was imposed by the power of vested interests and the speed of urban development. The claim is correct, if one acknowledges that the grid issued directly from the rural structures of the "côte" and that the latter constituted an organic element which was perfectly suited to the conditions of settlement in what was a "new" environment for the settlers of the St. Lawrence Valley and the Island of Montreal. How this grid of streets, inherited from the structures of the rural world, fulfilled its role as a framework for urban development, will be analysed in the chapter on Victorian Montreal. We now return to Place Royale, in Fort Ville-Marie, to witness the progress and development of the city during the first centuries.

PART II

THE FRONTIER TOWN

(1642-c. 1840)

La Ville de Montréal a un aspect fort riant; elle est bien située, bien percée, & bien bâtie. L'agrément de ses environs & de ses vûes inspirent une certaine gayeté, dont tout le Monde se ressent. (...)

Montréal est un quarré long, situé sur le bord du Fleuve, lequel s'élevant insensiblement, partage la Ville dans sa longueur en Haute & Basse; mais à peine s'aperçoit-on que l'on monte de l'une à l'autre. L'Hôtel-Dieu, les Magasins du Roy & la Place d'Armes, sont dans la Basse Ville; c'est aussi le Quartier de presque tous les Marchands. Le Séminaire & la Paroisse, les Récollets, les Jésuites, les Filles de la Congrégation, le Gouverneur & la plupart des Officiers sont dans la Haute. Au-delà d'un petit Ruisseau, qui vient du Nord-Ouest & borne la Ville de ce côté-là, on trouve quelques Maisons, & l'Hôpital Général; & en prenant sur la droite au-delà des Récollets, dont le Couvent est à l'extrémité de la Ville du même côté, il commence à se former une espèce de Faux-bourg, qui avec le tems fera un très-beau Quartier.

Père de Charlevoix, à Montréal, ce vintiéme de Mars, 1721.¹

CHAPTER THREE

SOCIETY DURING THE OLD REGIME

Old Quebec is at its best in the cottage, the manor and the parish church. These were the work of the people, unassisted by academic architects, and passed entirely unnoticed at the time of their creation.

Ramsay Traquair.²

1. Popular Traditions

From 1667 onward, thanks to its geographic location, Montreal became the main centre of fur trade in the colony, outdistancing Three Rivers and Quebec. Every summer a fair was held on the common, where natives came to trade their furs for European goods. Many "Montréalistes" found it financially rewarding to act as go-between for the natives and the King's agents. The small community benefited from this trade and prospered: from 625 inhabitants in 1665, the population grew to 1468 in 1698, and 2,025 in 1706.³ The old fort of Ville-Marie was no longer large enough to shelter such a large number of people. It was not destined to be enlarged, for the low and damp area of Pointe-à-Callières was subjected to seasonal floods and was too uncomfortable. Besides, times had changed. As the danger of attacks by natives decreased, and as trade grew in importance, the desire to make good the

economic promises of the environment replaced the proselytism of the heroic years. Numerous colonists had already settled on the St-Louis hillside on the other side of the St-Pierre River. One of the locations they settled on was the path leading to the Hôtel-Dieu of Jeanne Mance and to Notre-Dame-de-Bonsecours Chapel, a path that would later become St-Paul Street.⁴ Thus, some 94 dwellings were built between 1650 and 1672 on the hillside's high grounds⁵.

In fact, the St-Louis Hillside was much better suited for colonization than Pointe-à-Callières. It had steep ridges with a crest 13 to 15 meters above the river and was locked in between the St. Lawrence River and the St-Martin River, and was thus naturally protected. It could be easily fenced in and fortified, a task which was soon accomplished. An area of about one hundred acres was free for development, and in those days such an area was considered amply sufficient for a small town. To make the best of such advantages and in order to give some direction to the development of the land which had thus far gone uncontrolled, M. Dollier de Casson, superior of the Séminaire St-Sulpice and Seigneur of the Island of Montreal, traced the first streets of the town on March 12, 1672.⁶ This was Montreal's first plan and one of the first town-planning documents in the history of Canada. It left a deep imprint on the Montreal of today, but before looking into

this plan and in order to get a clear grasp of the first manifestation of architecture which would soon result from it, one would do well to delve more deeply into some of the demographic, social and cultural characteristics of the colonial society which settled in New France in the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century.

At the very end of the French Regime, the population of New France was very small, about sixty-five thousand inhabitants⁷. At the same time, the English colonies on the Atlantic coast numbered almost a million and a half inhabitants. In 1760, there were about 5,000 citizens in the town of Montreal; the population of the whole island was a mere 8,300 inhabitants⁸. It seems like a relatively high density compared to the whole colony, but it remains a small population. Boston for instance, with but 300 to 400 inhabitants in 1630, numbered 16,000 in 1742⁹; in the same year, Philadelphia, founded in 1682 (some 40 years after Montreal), numbered 13,000 inhabitants¹⁰. There are several reasons for Montreal's small population, but their analysis is outside the scope of this study. The colonization of America never aroused any national effort on the part of France and more money seems to have been lavished on the King's recreation than on New France¹¹.

The following figures speak for themselves: of the 65,000 inhabitants in the colony in 1760, scarcely 10,000

were originally from France, more precisely from Normandy and neighbouring provinces including the Paris region. Not counting the years 1740-1760, with a rather high immigration rate (3,565 immigrants from France) reflecting the arrival of His Majesty's soldiers to defend the colony during the fatal Seven Years' War, the slow immigration from France reached a peak during the vigorous administration of Intendant Talon (1665-1672). Indeed, from 1640 to 1700, 4,598 French colonists settled in North America; from 1700 to 1740, the number dwindled to 1667. One may assume that during the period of peace and relative prosperity which followed the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 - an important period for the social and cultural formation of the small colonial society - the population of New France was largely autonomous and increased by natural demographic process. In 1760, almost five-sixths of the population never knew any other natural or constructed environment apart from the New World environment¹²; this fact constitutes an important element which would mark colonial architecture. In our opinion, the remarkable adaptation of the traditional Quebec house to the local climatic conditions stems from this very conjuncture. More on this topic later.

For the time being, let us briefly survey the social and cultural background of the 10,000 French immigrants who settled in New France. Considering the little interest

suscitated by Voltaire's "quelques arpents de neige" (Voltaire's "a few arpents of snow"), infested with inhospitable natives, what kind of immigrants could ever think of coming to settle in Canada? Society in France was then divided into clearly defined social classes, and no privileged noble or wealthy bourgeois or any other rich man would be interested in crossing the ocean. At the time, France was in the midst of industrial organization and specialized labour easily found work and good wages within the kingdom¹³. Those who were tempted to come to America made sure they safeguarded their right to come back to France at the end of their contract. That left only the peasant, the poor and the disfavored, who could at least hope to acquire property or master a trade in New France; adventurers, the unstable and people in search of freedom, tired with the constraints of old Europe, or people attracted by fast profits in the fur trade¹⁴. Huguenots would have come, if, in 1628, Richelieu had not barred them for emigrating to New France.

This is the picture of French immigration to America in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: of the 10,000 odd colonists who settled in New France, 3,500 were discharged soldiers, 1,100 were "filles du roi" (King's brides), 1,000 were convicts, about 3,900 were hired under contract, and some 500 were individuals who came at their own expense¹⁵.

From this group, only those who were hired were likely to have a trade; most, according to Jean Hamelin, had no special skills¹⁶.

This is confirmed by the Swede Peter Kalm who visited Canada in 1749:

Mechanical arts like architecture, cabinetry, leatherwork and the like are not advanced here as one would expect, and the English are better at these trades than the French. It is due to the fact that most colonists here are discharged soldiers who never had the opportunity to learn a trade, or who learned one only by accident or out of necessity.¹⁷

This sounds like an objective testimony. Kalm was a well-known scientist who visited America as a member of a scientific expedition and who must have been well disposed towards the French at the time when Sweden's relations with France were very friendly.

Yet, Kalm must have judged "the mechanical arts" according to criteria set by an educated class, i.e. as a university scholar who was aware of new techniques and fashionable tastes. With the British colonies' wider spectrum of social classes, ranging from peasants to servants, from skilled workers to professionals, from bourgeois merchants to aristocrats, it is small wonder that Kalm was more impressed by the achievements of craftsmen from these colonies.

In the case of New France, most immigrants came from the peasant and lower classes of the poor western provinces, isolated from the activities and splendours of Versailles. Such a society was not likely to bring to the New World any of the more advanced philosophical thoughts, or any of the more recent arts and techniques of building and town planning. This does not mean that the French colonists were simple, insignificant people. On the contrary: they had inherited a very old ancestral culture, with deep roots in the Middle Ages, rich in customs and habits entrenched in the realities of life, and rich in solutions for the organization of their habitat and their environment.

Though the Middle Ages proper were long since gone, writes Alan Gowans, the people who settled early New France had remained essentially medieval in their basic attitudes and outlook on life, and therefore medieval principles of building still seemed self-evidently right to them. The folk architecture of New France not merely looked medieval, it was an integral expression of the medieval tradition in Western architecture¹⁸.

The medieval character of our traditional popular architecture has been noticed by several commentators, and Gérard Morisset insisted on "l'esprit du style roman qu'on perçoit dans les murailles nues ... pour peu qu'on examine notre architecture d'autrefois..."¹⁹. Some structures still

existing on the Island of Montreal and in the neighbouring region attest to this character, like the windmills of Pointe-aux-Trembles and Ile Perrot (Pointe-du-Moulin), the two austere turrets at the entrance of the Grand Séminaire on Sherbrooke Street West, or the Maison de la Ferme St-Gabriel in Pointe-St-Charles.

The same spirit prevailed at the level of organization of the physical environment. Thus, for instance, Talon saw in the starshaped villages (Charlesbourg, Bourg-Royal and Petite-Auvergne), which were of a very classical conception, models for the colonization of the land²⁰. Yet, the people preferred the "côte", a simple and appropriate model, as we have seen, dating back to the very colonization of Europe.

This popular tradition was the heritage of the first immigrants and it would have an enormous influence on the development of Quebec's native architecture, inasmuch as one is willing to consider the popular, anonymous buildings, created outside the framework of academic architecture, as true manifestations of architecture. Academic architecture existed in New France from the very beginning. We now turn our attention to its influence.

2. The Academic Tradition

New France was not solely populated by a class of poor colonists. Like the society from the Metropolis, French

Society in America had its hierarchy based on privileges and on the political or social usefulness of various groups. Thus the class of colonists was surrounded by a class of seignors, both lay and ecclesiastic; at the top, the ruling class, composed mostly of people from the Metropolis, enforced the absolute will of the King.²¹

The class of royal functionaries differed from the other classes, because its members were recruited among France's high-ranking aristocrats; it included the Governor, responsible for politics and for the Army, the Intendant, head of the administration, of justice and of the police force, and other important dignitaries. These functionaries enjoyed extensive powers in all fields of activities in the colony. The plans of any public building in New France had to be approved by the Intendant or the Governor. They were thus in a position to significantly influence architecture and the planning of the physical environment. This influence was to be markedly different from that of the peasant and lower middle class to which most of the French immigrants belonged.

A portrait of one of the noble representatives of the King should illustrate the gap that separated the ruler and his subjects. One of the more colorful administrators was Louis de Buade, Comte de Frantenac et de Palluau, who was Governor General of New France from 1672 to 1682 and again from

1689 until his death in 1698. The Buades belonged to a very old family of military aristocracy, a family which undoubtedly enjoyed the King's favour, since Louis XIII himself was godfather to young Louis de Buade. As could be expected, Louis chose a military career, took part in several campaigns during the Thirty Years War and earned himself as many promotions as he suffered wounds. When not in the Army, Frontenac spent his time at the King's court with his wife, Anne de la Grange, who was famous for her beauty. There he lived in luxury in a manner which suited his vanity more than it did his purse. His debts seem to have motivated his departure for the colony. Indeed, for a ruined aristocrat, the fur trade often provided the means to replenish his purse.²²

Frontenac frequented the highest circles of France's highest aristocracy and was interested in architecture; he had supervised the improvements of his château on Ile Savary.²³ There is no doubt that people like him did in fact transmit to the colony some of the academic tastes as well as some of the French genius on which European civilization thrived in those days. It is small wonder that upon his arrival in the Town of Quebec, Frontenac began criticizing the poor layout as well as the lack of order and symmetry of buildings in the budding capital. Here is what he wrote to Colbert, the Minister, on November 2, 1672: "Je trouve qu'on a fait jusques ici, ce

me semble, une très grande faute en laissant bâtir les maisons à la fantaisie des particuliers, et sans aucun ordre". His solution: "d'y faire marquer les rues et les places qu'on y pourrait faire, afin que dans la suite lorsque quelque particulier voudra bâtir, il le fasse avec symétrie, et d'une manière que cela puisse augmenter la décoration et l'ornement de la ville"²⁴. Thus, for the Governor, symmetry was a vital element for the beauty of urban development. This is a purely "classical" concept of town planning, implying mastery over nature and control over the forces of development. When he wrote these lines Frontenac probably had in mind some French towns, like Vitry-le-François (1634) or Charleville (1656), which had recently been planned along the most rigorous canons of 17th century classicism. Linking beauty in a development to the symmetry of its constituting parts is an attitude which is totally foreign to the medieval tradition. The humble colonists of Quebec (or of Montreal) looked upon organic development dictated by daily needs as the sole possible mode of development, a concept which Frontenac equated with fantasy. Which medieval town or ancestral village (aside from the "Bas-tides") ever developed otherwise? Lower may be exaggerating when he refers to Frontenac as Canada's first town-planner²⁵, but in the colony individuals from Frontenac's social class were cultured and held positions of authority. Their position

enabled them to counterbalance popular tradition still steeped in medievalism and to influence architecture and the development of the physical environment in New France.

This should become evident from a description of the achievements of the ruling class in that particular field. First and foremost there is Louisbourg; it had been planned since 1712 according to the theory and principles of the famous Military Engineer Sebastian Vauban. Louisbourg was located on the eastern shores of Cape Breton Island and was designed to protect the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the gateway to New France. It took over twenty years to build and cost some thirty million francs, much to the King's despair, and all to no avail since it fell both times when besieged (1745 and 1758) by the British who razed it after the second siege. This does not in any way diminish the quality and contemporary nature of its design. With its elaborate fortifications, its rigorously orthogonal grid of streets and its place of arms, it could compete favourably with the best towns ever created or remodelled in Europe by Vauban²⁶. The recent reconstruction of the King's bastion, and of the Château St-Louis, which served as a residence for the governor and the officers, tells us a lot about the character and quality of this colonial project. Because of its mass and the harmony of its architectonic rythms, the Château St-Louis imparts a sense of self-assured serenity

and discrete grandeur so characteristic of French classicism. (Pl. 8)

The same holds true for another Château St-Louis in Quebec City which was the residence of the Governor of New France. It was built around 1724 and the drawings of Chaussegros de Léry, the King's Engineer, are still extant. Its turrets and pavilions were placed symmetrically with respect to the central axis of a main door with a classical fronton; it was an imposing building in spite of its austere but harmonious bareness. The Intendant's palace probably looked more monumental and more ornate. It was completed in 1718 by Chaussegros de Léry and, like Château St-Louis, it is no longer existing. This palace featured a curb roof obviously inspired by the rules of architect Mansart, a fact which clearly indicated where official architecture had its source.

Philippe de Rigaud, Marquis de Vaudreuil, came from one of the most illustrious - though not richest - families in the south of France. He came to New France to seek his fortune and indeed followed a brilliant career: he was Governor of Montreal (1699-1703) and Governor General of the colony (1705-1725). In Montreal, between 1723 and 1726, he built himself a château which bore his name.²⁷ Located on St-Paul Street, at the foot of today's Place Jacques-Cartier, this château became the official residence of the governors in Montreal during the French Regime. In 1773, it became the College of Montreal

and was unfortunately completely destroyed by fire in 1803²⁸.

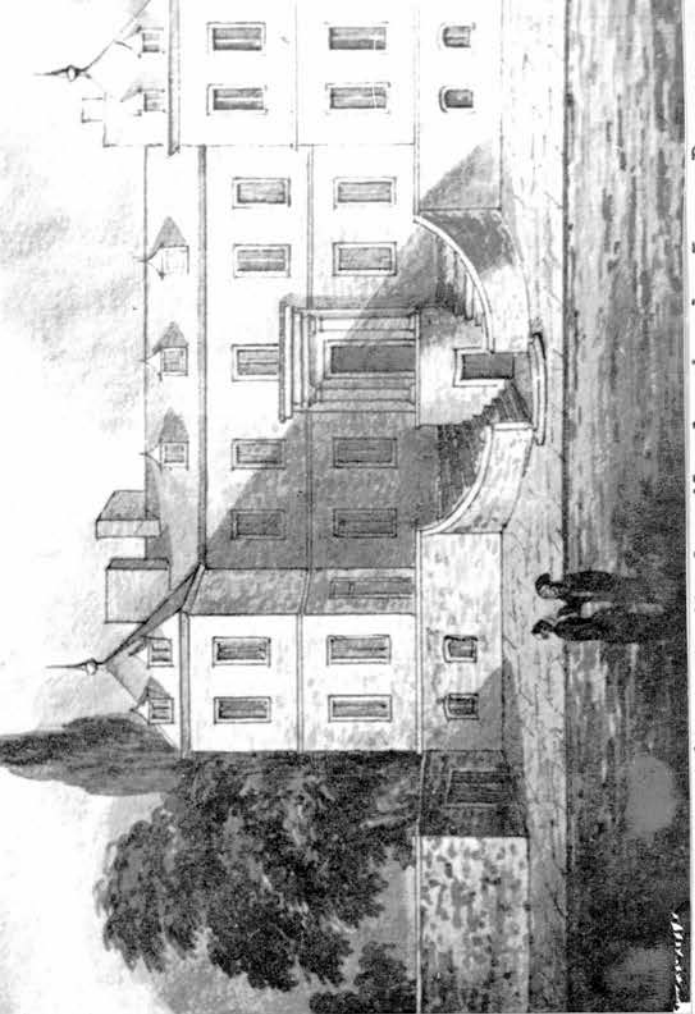
It was reputedly the most beautiful building in Montreal during the Old Regime. The little Château of Vaudreuil was a perfect example of the French classical tradition, with formal inner and outer layouts and a formal façade and a small French garden. Gowans refers to it as the Canadian equivalent of the great baroque palaces of French nobility in the seventeenth century²⁹. To say that the Château de Vaudreuil possessed the same refined forms as the French palaces would be carrying a generous comparison too far, but it certainly was built in the same spirit. The same may be said of Château St-Louis in Quebec and in Louisbourg or of the Intendant's palace. The high-ranking Marquis de Vaudreuil was definitely aware of the architecture of his days. Chaussegros de Léry, who had been Vaudreuil's Architect, was the King's Engineer and was the son of a well-known engineer from Toulon; he had been a pupil and protégé of the great Vauban, and had certainly studied the most fashionable architectural techniques and concepts of his days³⁰. (Pl. 7)

What has been said about the influence of the ruling class on town planning and civic architecture in the colony holds true, with slight nuances, for the influence of church authorities on religious architecture. Missionary orders like those of the Jesuits, the Sulpicians and the



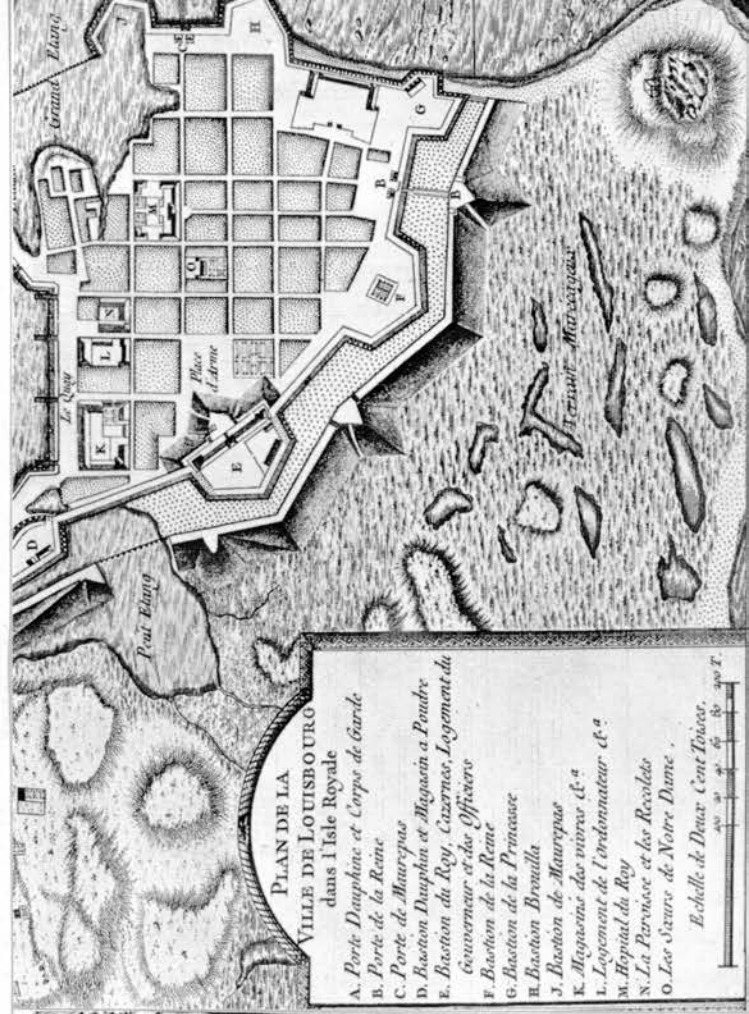
5. Map of the island of Montreal and surrounding region, by N. Bellin, 1744.

6. Relationship between the system of "côtes" and the orthogonal grid of streets of Montreal.



7. Château de Vaudreuil, drawing by James Duncan. Gaspard Chaussegros de Léry, arch., 1723.

8. Plan of the city of Louisbourg on Isle Royale, by N. Bellin, 1764.



Recollets came to settle in New France. Like the class of royal functionaries, they depended heavily on the Metropolis and were competing for substantial financial contributions as well as for talents. In the beginning at least, these communities used to recruit members almost exclusively in the fatherland. This practice contributed to the import of some of the tastes and fashions of the Old World into the New World. Some of these orders had their own architectural style. The Society of Jesus adopted the style created from the famous Gesù; it was like a trade mark which they imposed on their missions to identify their achievements. Thus the College of the Jesuits, built in 1648, and the Jesuit Church built in 1666, both in Quebec City, showed many similarities to the college and chapel of the Jesuits of La Flèche in France, a complex of buildings completed a few decades earlier with the participation of an excellent architect named Etienne Martellange. In Montreal, the Jesuits started building an establishment on Notre-Dame Street in 1692 but it has since disappeared. Like those of Quebec City, these buildings were very European in character and would not have been out of place in a small French provincial town. The same may be said of the monastery and church of the Récollets in Montreal, then located between the following streets: Notre-Dame, des Récollets, Ste-Hélène and St-Pierre. They were demolished in 1867. The same comment could

also be made about the first Notre-Dame Church and the Old Seminary of the Sulpicians to which we shall return in Chapter V.

The Bishop of Quebec would also have a pro-academic influence on the religious architecture of the colony. In his sphere of influence he enjoyed the same absolute authority as the Governor and, to quote Historian Frégault, both "se ressemblent comme des frères... Ils sont réellement frères. Ils se recrutent dans les mêmes couches sociales et, à l'occasion, jusque dans les mêmes familles. Ils ont une conception analogue de la vie publique, de l'autorité, des préséances et du prestige attachés à leurs fonctions".³¹ Thus François de Laval, the first Bishop of New France, came from the old family of Montmorency, so ancient that Vachon de Belmont said about them "qu'on en ignore l'origine, comme celle du Nil".³² The same is true of his successor who was as noble as his name sounded aristocratic: Jean-Baptiste de La Croix de Chevrières de Saint-Vallier. Laval and Saint-Vallier, like Frontenac or Vaudreuil, belonged to a privileged elite for whom the study of the concepts and styles of contemporary architecture was an indispensable asset for a well-educated mind. Their personal experience complemented this knowledge: Frontenac had himself undertaken the improvements of his own Château, and Saint-Vallier, an ordinary chaplain at the court of Louis XIV, witnessed the birth of Versailles' splendors.

translator
chaplain in ordinary

In fact, the cathedral and the episcopal palace of Quebec reflected very academic tastes. The former, reconstructed in 1744 by Chaussegros de Léry and now completely disfigured, was built in a severe but powerful Jesuit style which was very much in fashion in France during that period. The latter was unfortunately altered in 1831 to the point of being unrecognizable. With its front court it followed the typical plan of the French château of the seventeenth century and, according to Gowans it constituted the most elaborate construction of the century in New France³³.

The influence of a Laval or of a Saint-Vallier affected mainly buildings of a very official nature but, like the influence of great religious communities, it was reflected in all the religious architecture of Quebec for a long time after the end of French domination in America. How did this come about?

A likely explanation is that the rather orthodox and conformist population had been handed down a stereotyped image of the church as a place of worship, by the bishops and religious orders who had always enjoyed great prestige and authority. This image was perpetuated for two centuries and transmitted from one generation to another through the system of apprenticeship, from the master to the journeyman and from the journeyman to the apprentice according to the traditions

of artisans.

Just as governor or the intendant had to approve the plans for public buildings, the Bishop of Quebec had to approve the plans for all churches built in the colony. As a faithful disciple of the Jesuits, Mgr Laval favoured centralization and found it to his advantage to impose an identical model, drawn from his academic background, for places of worship. This much he did: the churches constructed during his reign on the seigneuries of the "Côte Beaupré" and "Ile d'Orléans" had almost the same features, one of which was the latin cross ending in a semi-circular apse³⁴. In order to ensure consistency in the quality of work, Laval founded in 1675, at St-Joachim near Quebec, a School of Arts and Crafts for the teaching of carpentry, sculpture, painting, church decoration, masonry and joinery. French masters such as Frère Luc (1614-1685), who had worked in Paris and Rome with the best-known craftsmen of his times, and Jacques le Blond dit Latour (1670-1715), architect, sculptor and painter from Bordeaux, helped transmit to the artisans of New France the architectural and artistic concepts that prevailed in France. This school of Arts and Crafts lasted until the end of the French Regime and contributed to the formation of many important Quebec artists of whom Jean Baillargé was the first of a long line of architects and master-sculptors in Quebec.³⁵

Laval and his successors proposed models and saw to it that the knowledge and skills required for their completion would be taught. This is as far as they were able to go, for they did not have the material and human resources required to build each parish church in the country; moreover, they depended to a large extent on local manpower and finances.

This explains why old parish churches in Quebec look like the result of a unique and original blend of architectural elements belonging to two different traditions. The popular tradition on the one hand, perpetuated the medieval tradition through local craftsmen and builders, while on the other hand, the baroque classical traditions represented the legacy of the cultural and religious authorities. Thus, churches with classical layouts were built with massive walls made of rough stones and with steep roofs. Carefully cut protruding corner stones decorating the walls, arched windows, openings with regular arches, symmetrically placed niches, and a bell tower, with the steeple of a gothic church but the contours of a classical lantern, complete this architectural picture.

Inside the churches, where the effects of the rigorous climate were not quite as noticeable, the baroque classical tradition was more freely expressed with well-proportioned masses, basket-handle vaults and, in the midst of it

all, gilded wooden sculptures in Louis XIV, Louis XV and even Rococo styles. The original freshness of these sculptured interiors makes up for their doubtful academic genuineness, and Ramsay Traquair refers to these interiors as one of North America's most remarkable artistic achievements.³⁶ These sculptures were the work of master sculptors who had studied Vignole, the Grand Blondel and the Petit Blondel, craftsmen like Levasseur and Baillargé in Quebec, or like Louis-Amable Quévillon (1749-1823), one of Montreal's best-known sculptors, whose name was linked with the decoration of more than twenty-five churches in the Montreal region. Unfortunately, most of these places of worship have disappeared, often razed by fires, like the magnificent church de l'Enfant-Jésus in Pointe-aux-Trembles, built from 1705 onwards and destroyed by a fire on February 21, 1937³⁷.

In the Montreal region there are still a few churches to remind us of this happy blend of the academic and popular traditions. They also give us a good idea of the degree of excellence attained in the field of wood sculpture. Thus, the small church of Ste-Jeanne-Françoise-de-Chantal, on Ile Perrot, was completed in 1786 and most of its interior decoration dates back to the early 19th century; with its cruciform layout, it is typical of the village churches of Old Quebec. The ugly front that has been added to it in 1901 must not be

allowed to detract from the vigor and individuality of its sculptured interior decoration, or from the three remarkable altars, attributed to Quévillon³⁸. The church of St-Michel-de-Vaudreuil is another example, in spite of the alterations to its front. Built in 1773-75, it contains many sculptures, most of them by two competing masters, Liébert and Quévillon³⁹. But, in our opinion, the most important church remains the church of the Visitation, located at Sault-au-Récollet, on Gouin Boulevard, west of Papineau Street. It is the only church in Montreal for which most of the building dates back to the French Regime. Indeed the main building was started in 1749 and work had sufficiently progressed in 1751 to allow mass to be celebrated; Charles Guilbaut, born in that parish, was the "contracting mason". The main building was an example of good peasant masonry, with classical arched windows, but several additions were made to it later on. A new front was added in the early 1850's, and was designed in a severe English neo-baroque style by the prolific Montreal architect John Ostell. We shall deal with Ostell's work in later chapters. Inside the church, the spectacle is unique: master sculptors of great talent succeeded one another in the task. The tabernacle of the main altar is the work of Liébert (1792); the altars are by Quévillon (1802-1806); Fleury David did the vault and the major part of the present interior, completed between 1816 and

1831; the pulpit is the work of Chartrand (1836)⁴⁰. (Pl. 9 & 10)

3. Enduring Attitudes

From the very beginning, management of the environment as well as architecture in New France showed signs of a strong dichotomy, which found its origin in two distinct traditions which were almost impervious to one another and which brought their own ideology and cultural heritage to French America. The popular classes were very homogeneous and came almost exclusively from the same social stratum: the lower middle class. They were people without great resources or much specialization in their trades and without much self-awareness. Yet, their legacy to the New World was a precious heritage of popular artisan traditions. Their traditions in the fields of architecture and management of the environment were deeply anchored in their mentality and dated back to the earliest Middle Ages when dwellings, villages and towns were recovering from the ashes left by Norman destruction.

When transplanted on American soil, the population of immigrants multiplied naturally and rapidly became indigenous and adapted to the new harsh and uncultivated environment. This is especially true in the Montreal region, which, until the arrival of the loyalists in 1775, remained the most remote colonization centre on the North American continent. It is therefore natural for the indigenous population

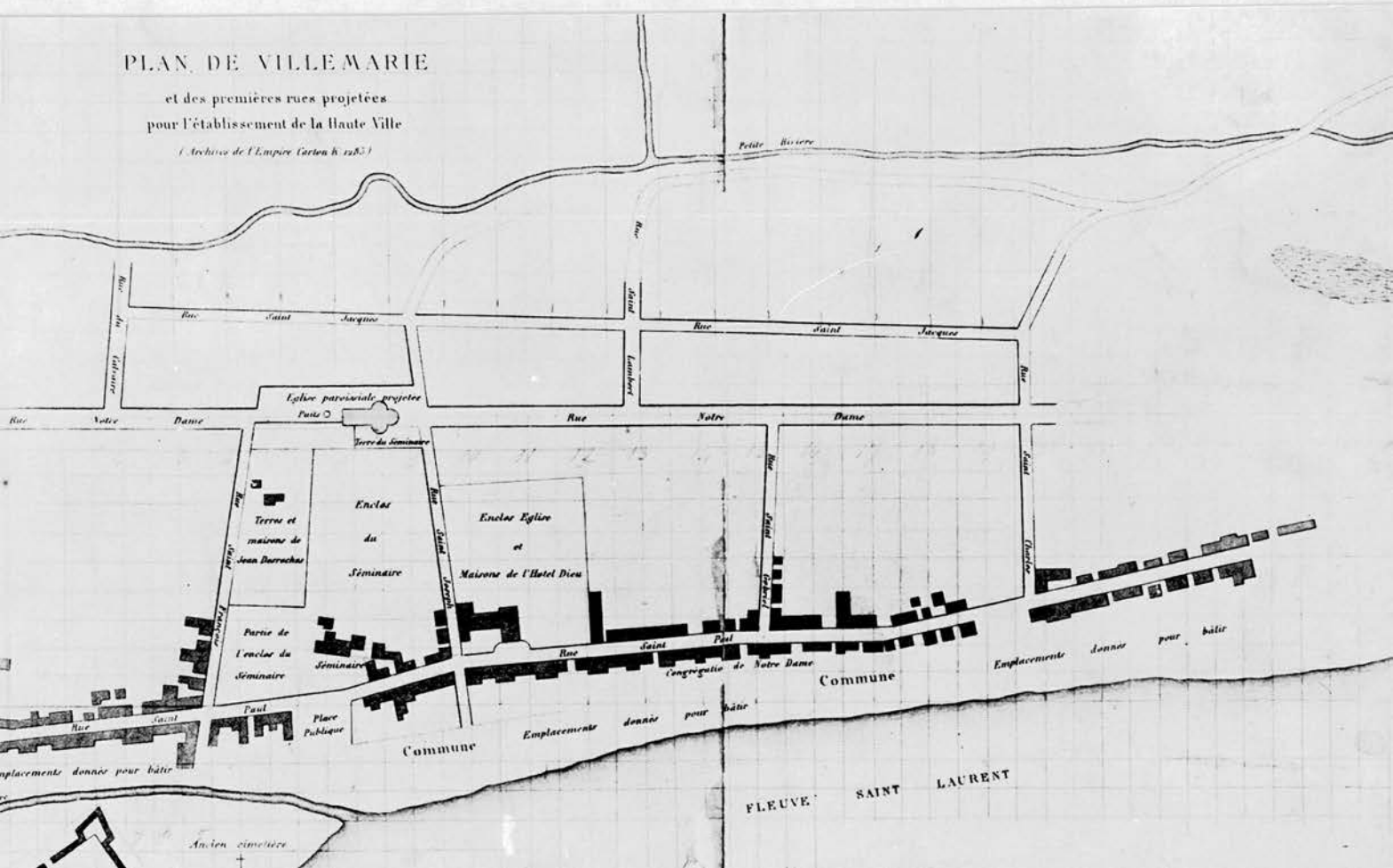


9. Church of Sault-au-Récollet, exterior.



10. Church of Sault-au-Récollet, interior.

11. Plan of the streets laid out by Dollier de Casson, attributed to Bénigne Basset, sieur des Lauriers.



to adopt the cultural and artisan heritage of their parents to living conditions on the continent. This process of adaptation is quite apparent in their bare unpretentious buildings. Thus, the traditional Quebec house from the Montreal region, which was inspired from identifiable models from France, and more accurately from Brittany, underwent transformations dictated by the climate and the way of life, which made it unique. Its foundations rose above the ground as a safeguard against snow accumulations, the perron and gallery were projected as a spacer between the ground and the house or as a summer extension of the latter. The roof was widened and the eaves were extended beyond the vertical plane of the walls, covering the perron-gallery and protecting it against heat and bad weather. The summer kitchen was developed as a result of the activities of the summer season, etc. etc.⁴¹.

The ruling class constituted the other founding group. Like a cast, it was very homogeneous: the church and the state were working hand in hand. The members of the ruling class transplanted into New France a paternalistic, absolutist régime which was at its zenith during the reign of King Louis XIV (1661-1715). They were recruited amongst the highest aristocracy and were thus aware of the latest ideas in the fields of architecture and town-planning. Moreover, unlike the lower class, they enjoyed an excess of resources, both

financially and in talent, and their architecture underwent few changes from one continent to another. Of course, their achievements did not reach the same heights or the same degree of refinement as their great French models, and the magnitude of a project was always related to the interest the King took in the colony. Nevertheless, they remained true to the spirit and character of French architecture. Both in America and in Europe, through a conscious process or not, aristocrats and rulers were identified with their architecture: it was like a symbol of their social rule, of their pretensions and privileges.

Parish church architecture was the only architecture to have blended both traditions in a relatively homogeneous manner. The close relationship imposed on both classes within the religious context probably accounts for this fusion. The lower class and lower clergy were dependent for pastoral guidance on the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and the latter relied on local resources and manpower for the construction of places of worship.

The discovery of this dichotomy of traditions, which was to shape Quebec's architecture from the very beginning, is not recent: Gowan, Morisset and Traquair have all raised the matter in one manner or another. One aspect that has not yet been thoroughly investigated is that of the mentality, attitudes and activities of each class in regard to management

of the environment and the perpetuation of some of these attitudes beyond the French colonial period.

The scope of such a study is too vast and too complex to be treated fully here; besides, for lack of relevant research, it would be incomplete. Thus, it would be interesting to know the exact origin of the French colonists who settled in the small town of Montreal and in the neighbouring "côtes". Did they come from towns and villages or from the countryside? Were their traditions rural or urban? To our knowledge there is no monograph dealing with these questions and the task of gathering data from archives goes beyond the scope of a general study of this nature.

All we know is that, at the time of colonization of the North American continent, France already had an urban tradition dating far back into the past. Such a tradition must have played a part in the foundation of towns like Quebec, Three Rivers and Montreal, which, towards the end of French rule, harboured close to 20% of the population of New France⁴². On the other hand, the fact remains that for various reasons mentioned in the previous chapter, compact villages did not find much favour with the people who much preferred the "côte" or range as a model of human community. The structure of this community was fulfilling a particular purpose; while each individual settler owned his own lot, he nevertheless

depended greatly on the community of neighbours, because of his isolation and because of the harshness of the climate. This remarkably simple and orderly organization, in a land inhabited by an increasingly homogeneous population, produced an egalitarian attitude which is still prevalent today in the rural countryside.

The old rural structures and the "côte" in particular were at the origin of the orthogonal grid which is typical in the older districts of Montreal. These districts were inhabited mainly by people who had emigrated from the "côtes" and rural ranges. Hence, one would expect the spirit of rural organization, both territorial and social, to have penetrated the urban environment. It would be pointless to make a definitive statement without an adequate study of the matter, but it may nevertheless be suggested that the cohesion, uniformity and gregariousness which characterize the old francophone neighbourhoods of Montreal with their uninterrupted rows of anonymous houses and clusters of individual dwellings, might have originated in the perpetuation of a certain mentality and of certain attitudes.

One fact which stands out during the French Regime is the total absence of power or participation by the popular class in public administration in general and in municipal administration in particular. Gustave Lanctôt studied

this phenomenon and expressed a categorical opinion on this point. In the administration of New France, all the powers were centralized in the hands of two men: the Governor, who was the King's personal representative, and the Intendant, who was the administrator who "règleme[n]te effectivement et complèteme[n]t" by ordinances. "Dans ce système administratif, quelle est la part du peuple? asks Lanctôt ... "Elle est nulle..."⁴³. The same situation prevailed in municipal government. To quote Lanctôt...

de cette revue de l'administration municipale du temps de la Nouvelle-France, on peut conclure que les villes étaient régies et réglementées par des autorités indépendantes de toute représentation populaire. (...) En définitive, cette administration, à la fois bienveillante et paternelle, assurait, selon les conceptions et les méthodes de l'époque, un ordre moral et matériel, qui englobait les bonnes moeurs, la sécurité, l'hygiène, la voirie, les incendies, l'alimentation et même le coût de la vie. Mais elle ne réservait aucune place à l'initiative personnelle ni à la coopération collective, qui auraient permis à ces petites villes de progresser et de grandir et à leurs citoyens de développer leurs qualités d'intelligence, de travail et d'ambition, toutes avenues fermées aux citadins du Canada, bien qu'elles fussent ouvertes à ceux de la France métropolitaine⁴⁴.

No more need be said.

The evolution of Montreal under the French regime

will be studied in the next chapters, together with the character and significance of the influence exerted by the ruling class on the organization of the urban environment. The influence of the lower class was minimal and limited to private dwellings. The French ruling class was replaced by a foreign but similar class at the time of surrender to the British. This caused the same kind of relationship between the ruling class and the lower class to be perpetuated for another half of a century. If the lower class enjoyed little power during the old regime, it was to have its influence further eroded to the point of losing contact with the economy. The lower class watched helplessly as industry fell under the control of others. This may partly account for the lower class' passivity and inability to manage the environment, a fact which is reflected in the lower class urban neighbourhoods in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The francophone districts were like mirrors of this reality at a time when the elegant anglophone neighbourhoods with their rich and individually designed homes reflected the powers of a class in full control of its environment.

Some of the stifled collective attitudes displayed by the francophone classes during the whole evolution of Montreal may be attributed, in our opinion, to the influence exerted by religion on our society. Indeed, the clergy had

created its basic institutions, molded its traditions and its mentality, and had finally acquired full control over our society. Hence, a study of the role of the Catholic Church in Quebec, from the very beginning of French colonization is vital to the understanding of the essence and extent of that role⁴⁵.

One must bear in mind that the French colony settled in America at a time when France was undergoing a religious renaissance of deep mystical fervour and was also actively participating in the counter-reformation of Francis de Sales, Berulle, Vincent de Paul, Jean-Jacques Olier, etc... The foundation of Montreal in 1642 by Maisonneuve's group of proselytes was in keeping with this religious movement. There is little doubt that the King, the Church, the soldiers, the peasants and the religious orders were all imbued with this ambitious spirit and were hoping to establish in the New World a catholic society after the image of the fatherland⁴⁶.

Judging from the following quotations from Arthur Lower, they did succeed to a degree: "On the religious and ecclesiastical side, New France came close to the cleric's dream, the perfect society which only the Church could provide"⁴⁷. Circumstances worked in favour of the Church. The conditions it found in North America were very similar to those in the Middle Ages in Europe: an open territory ready for a new order.

Its task was greatly facilitated by the very kind of population of peasant stock, with deep roots solidly entrenched in orthodoxy and conformity, carefully screened from any protestant or heretic element. The only obstacle to come in the way of complete success turned out to be the secular ruling class which was jealous of its authority and of its privileges.

However, this obstacle was to disappear with the conquest of 1760. Hence, the near theocratic character of the French colony, marked by the control of the Church over education, cultural development and social services, not only did not disappear, but was reinforced when the regime changed. In exchange for unconditional loyalty, the Church acquired absolute authority in these fields ... with the blessings of the victor who looked on this stabilizing framework for the lower classes as the best safeguard for its own interests.

The Church took advantage of the collective return to the soil after the conquest and sought to foster a new ideal: a peasant christianity, likening catholicism to the calling of the land and the calling of the land to the calling to the nation⁴⁸. Hence the city acquired a derogatory connotation, likening it to Sodom rather than to Jerusalem, and urban development became synonymous with dechristianisation. This was not a very positive outlook for the rural population which would be forced, in order to survive, to emigrate to the city

in the second half of the nineteenth century. As Falardeau pointed out: "This clerical-rural culture could not adequately prepare the people to meet the expectations and demands of industrial urban life"⁴⁹.

The consequences of this refusal to accept the city will be analysed in the course of this study. In order to complete the picture, we should describe an institution which was created by the Church and which was to become the basic structure of social organization of French Canadians, fulfilling all at once religious, educational, and later on municipal functions: the parish. The first one appeared in 1722 and the institution has endured until today. The adherence of all members to the Church's religious and social standards added to the stability generated by the natural cohesiveness of its members. Even though the urban parish was more impersonal than the rural one, it remained a dominant characteristic of the urban environment and constituted the first frame of reference with which a community could identify.

The physical legacy of this social framework would be impressive: the parish church, towering above the neighbouring landscape, both in the old villages and in the cities. In Montreal, the number of parish churches would increase in direct proportion to population density. Thus in 1874, there were no fewer than 74 churches for a population of some 150,000

inhabitants. Mark Twain said about Montreal that it was the only city he knew of where one could not throw a pebble without breaking a church window. It was more than a quip: it expressed a very distinctive reality in Montreal⁵⁰.

Several features characteristic of Montreal and of its society at various epochs are rooted in the society of the old regime; this explains why, in this chapter, we have intentionally anticipated the chronological development of the city. Certain ideologies and attitudes which date back to the old regime would become the behavioural archetypes of the future. Let us now turn to the development of Montreal in the first century: a development marked by a definite domination of the parish church.

THE FRONTIER TOWN

Elle est passablement bien fortifiée et entourée d'un mur élevé et épais... Les rues principales sont droites, larges et coupées à angles droits par les petites rues. Il y en a qui sont pavées, mais c'est l'exception. La ville a de nombreuses portes: à l'est, du côté de la rivière, on en compte cinq, deux grandes et trois petites; et sur l'autre côté il y en a pareillement plusieurs.

Pierre Kalm, 1749.¹

1. Laying out the First Streets

On March 12th, 1672, Dollier de Casson accompanied by, among others, Bénigne Basset, who was both surveyor and court clerk, went to Côteau St-Louis to lay out the first streets of Ville-Marie. Along the length of the upper crest of the hillside, roughly following a southwest-northeast direction, he lined up eight markers stamped with the seminary's seal to determine the boundaries of the first street, Notre-Dame Street. Its location on the crest and its width of thirty feet (French measure) made it the most important street projected for the small town. This is how Dollier de Casson meant it to be. This street was meant to run on either side of a parish church which he intended to erect right in the middle of the hill and in the middle of Notre-Dame Street. The actual

construction of Notre-Dame Church started the next year. Two other streets were laid out in an almost parallel direction to this main street. The one on the river side was to be twenty-four feet wide and named St-Paul Street. At the time, it was but a path winding its way from the old fort of Pointe-à-Cal-lières to L'Hôtel-Dieu de Jeanne Mance and to Notre-Dame-de-Bonsecours Chapel. On the other side of Côteau St-Louis, on the side of the St-Martin creek (also called the small river), St. James Street was laid out; it was to be eighteen feet wide. Later on, in the 20th century, it was to become the financial centre of the whole country.

Dollier de Casson lined up seven other streets perpendicularly to the first three streets, thus creating a relatively orthogonal grid of streets with rectangular parcels of land of unequal dimensions. They were from west to east: rue St-Pierre, rue du Calvaire, rue St-François (today's rue St-François-Xavier), rue St-Joseph (today's St-Sulpice), rue St-Lambert, rue St-Gabriel and rue St-Charles. Three of these streets, all of which were eighteen feet wide, St-Pierre, St-François, and St-Gabriel, connected St-Paul Street to Notre-Dame Street. Two streets, St-Joseph and St-Charles, also eighteen feet wide, run as far as St. James Street. Another two streets, du Calvaire and St-Lambert, connect Notre-Dame Street with St. James Street. The latter were twenty-four

feet wide and were designed to cross St-Martin Creek. However, rue du Calvaire would soon be abandoned, while rue St-Lambert would later become the famous St. Lawrence Boulevard, the major axis of demographic growth on the Island of Montreal. Except for rue du Calvaire, rue St-Charles (which will be absorbed by Place Jacques-Cartier), and rue St-Joseph (today's rue St-Sulpice), which was slightly rerouted, all the streets laid out by Dollier de Casson still exist today.² (Pl. 11)

Thus, as far back as 1672, Ville Marie was planned according to a relative orthogonal grid, which would eventually materialize when built upon. In the southwest-northeast direction, the street alignment was dictated by the existing paths, like rue St-Paul, or by the natural topography of Coteau St-Louis. In the direction perpendicular to the previous direction, the alignment of streets seems to have been dictated by the existence of land concessions granted by Maisonneuve, like those granted to Pierre Gadois, Robert le Cavalier, Jean Desroches or to the Sieur Lambert Closse. For instance, the layout of St-Pierre Street follows the joint boundaries separating the properties of Gadois and of le Cavalier, the former being two arpents wide by fifteen arpents long and granted in January 1648³, the latter being two arpents wide and twenty arpents long and granted in 1654⁴. As was the custom, these concessions were perpendicular to the small St-Pierre River. The

contract for Pierre Gadois' concession stipulated that: "si les seigneurs avoient besoin de partie de ce terrain pour l'établissement de la ville, ils pourroient le prendre en remplaçant pareille quantité dans la profondeur, et en payant le terrain défriché selon l'estimation qui en serait faite de sa valeur par des experts"⁵. Another example is that of rue St-François, which follows the boundaries of the concession granted to Jean Desroches on April 10th, 1655... "à prendre sur le bord de la commune 3 perches de large sur 31 perches et six pieds..."⁶. Rue St-Joseph follows the outline of the land granted to Le Moyne, Gervais and Basset; rue St-Lambert, named "à la mémoire de ce brave major, mort pour la défense du pays"⁷ and later to become the famous St. Lawrence Boulevard, follows the western boundaries of the fief granted to Lambert Closse on February 2, 1658⁸.

Even though the alignment of several streets on the first plan seemed to have been dictated by the contour of the land to be settled, Dollier de Casson's plan does reflect a desire for order in the physical, economic and social development of the budding community. He would encourage the citizens to "élever leurs bâtiments, destinés à l'ornement & à la décoration de leur ville, & à faciliter le commerce tant avec les habitants qu'avec les étrangers..."⁹. In this sense, it was indeed a plan for development, the first for the city of

Montreal, and as such it deserves closer study.

How good was the plan? What kind of urban environment was it creating? How was it to influence the development of Montreal? These are interesting topics. Unfortunately, few specialists in the matter gave it much thought and, when they did, they did it in a superficial manner. Some saw in Dollier de Casson's plan nothing but a poor copy of the checker board plan of Philadelphia. This is rather unlikely, since Holm and William Penn drew their plan in 1682, some ten years after Casson drew his for Montreal¹⁰. Others, like Raoul Blanchard, have exaggerated its importance and influence: "le plan tout entier de l'immense ville est sorti des cartons du Sulpicien"¹¹. It is true that there is a certain similarity between the first layout of streets and the typical street layout of Montreal; it is also true that the alignment of a street like St - Lambert, the future St. Lawrence Boulevard, was used as a guide line for the layout of several streets in the immediate neighbourhood. Yet, as we have attempted to show in Chapter 2, we maintain that it was the permanence of the physical features of the "côte" and of the mode of subdividing the land which has created the street patterns of Greater Montreal. Most often though, the importance of this first plan has been either neglected or minimized, and reported as an event among many others in the

history of the city. According to present day standards this first plan may not be very elaborate and may not cover a very wide area, but this does not detract from its significance or from what we may learn from it.

The Dollier de Casson layout is very simple, with few streets demarcating several parcels of land of unequal dimensions. There is no attempt to further subdivide the lots as in the case of the Penn plan in Philadelphia. A glance at the terrier of the Seignory of Montreal will show that the lots inside the boundaries of the old fortifications varied in area and shape as a result of several transformations.¹² The only fixed feature on the plan, apart from the alignment of the streets, is the crossroad selected for the construction of the parish church. This centre is connected to the Place du Marché (Market Square) which already existed near the mouth of the St-Pierre River. These two poles, one economic and the other social, would become the two centres of development of the small town.

In order to understand the essence of this plan, one must follow its development in time and space, and the best way would be to trace the development of Ville-Marie through the successive maps of the city. This is our only choice, since there does not exist a single contemporary view of the city for the period between 1642 and 1760, not even a sketch of

urban landscape, of a street or even of a building¹³. On the other hand, unknown but competent engineers like Catalogne or de Léry, and even a sculptor named Paul Labrosse, have left us good sets of explicit plans, some of which have been authenticated and verified by Gustave Lanctôt¹⁴. Thus, from 1684 onwards, it is possible to retrace the topographical growth of the town as well as the transformations which, while slightly modifying Dollier de Casson's original plans, would eventually fulfill them.

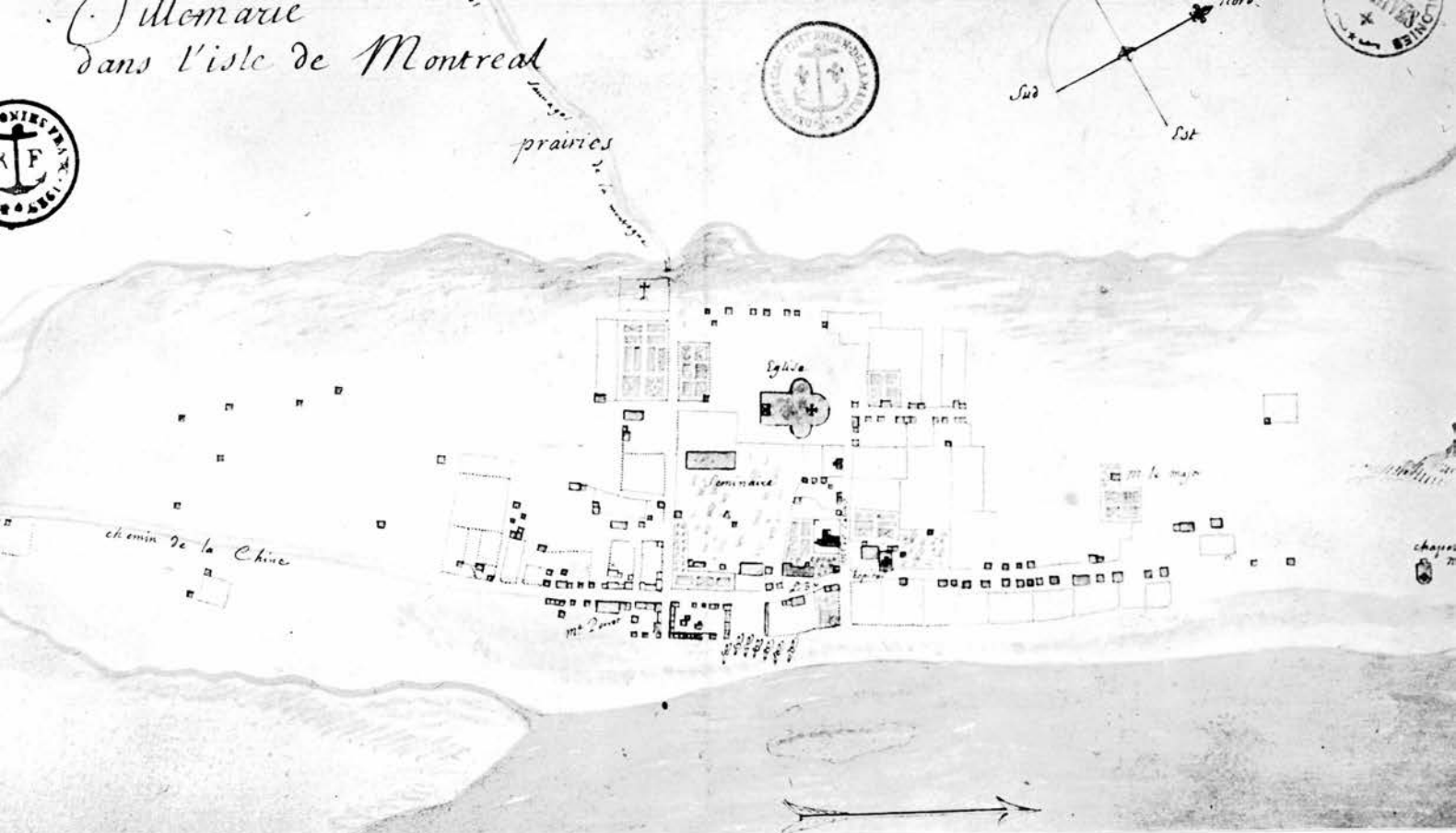
2. A Century of Development

The first layout was drawn by an unknown author and bears the following inscription: "envoyé par Mr. Denonville le 13 novembre 1685". The Marquis de Denonville was Governor of the colony from 1685 to 1689; this would tend to authenticate the document¹⁵. On this plan, the prominence of the parish church, erected in the middle of Notre Dame Street, is evident. Baron de Lahontan who visited Ville-Marie in 1684, states that this church is splendid and that "elle est bâtie sur le modèle de celle de St-Sulpice de Paris..."¹⁶. One may wish to argue such a flattering comparison; nevertheless, it reveals the importance and significance of this place of worship in the midst of the upper town. The comment is all the more significant since Baron Lahontan was well known for his anticlerical views. This attests to Dollier de Casson's determination to place the

parish church in a prominent position. On the northwest side a public square was gradually taking shape: it was the embryo of today's Place d'Armes. (Pl. 12)

In spite of Dollier de Casson's exhortations to the citizenry, his initial scheme was barely beginning to take shape. A few buildings were built on four streets: St-Paul, Notre-Dame, St. Francis and St-Joseph. This was sufficient to link the two essential poles of the small community: the church square and the market place. Indeed, every Tuesday and Friday: "les Habitans riches en bled, bétail, volaille & mille autres d'enrées qu'il(s) vendent ordinairement à la Ville..." would gather in the lower town on Place du Marché, then also called Place d'Armes¹⁷. It was Colbert who wished that public markets be held for "la commodité des particuliers, qui avaient à se pourvoir des choses nécessaires à la vie, & aussi pour l'avantage des gens de la campagne, qui désiraient de vendre leurs denrées ou les produits de leur industrie"¹⁸. This place corresponds to today's Place Royale, partly occupied by the Old Custom building. It was the new city's true economic centre as well as the centre for justice. For the benefit of the population, it was considered normal that criminals be punished in public view, where the population would normally gather.

It is rather difficult to establish the exact



12. Plan of Ville-Marie in 1684.

13. Plan of the town of Montreal in 1704, attributed to Levasseur de Néré.



number of inhabitants living at the time in Ville-Marie. This is explained by the fact that the various researchers who dealt with the matter did not always indicate whether their findings applied to the population of the whole Island of Montreal, or of the District of Montreal, or of the Côteau St-Louis alone. Thus Lanctôt refers to a population of 1,500 inhabitants in 1684¹⁹. This figure seems large for Ville-Marie, as the 1685 census of New France counts only 119 residences in the town. The figure of 724 inhabitants from the 1685 census seems closer to reality²⁰.

A second plan was drawn in 1704 by someone whose identity is not certain. It reveals the city's sizeable expansion both in area and in population²¹. The latter had doubled in 20 years to 1,600 or 2,000 inhabitants²². Of the several reasons which account for this demographical and topographical expansion, three are worth mentioning. As had already been noted by Baron de Lahontan, the côtes and neighbouring seigneuries produced enough food to sustain a large urban population²³. At the same time, Ville-Marie was enjoying a flourishing economy as it had become the fur trade's centre as well as the military warehouse for the western territories²⁴. Finally, an ordinance from the Intendant, dated 15 June 1688, on the enlargement of the city and on the widening of its streets to 30 feet, made three demands on all

landowners living within the walls of Ville-Marie. They were to limit their lot to one arpent, start construction within one year, and respect the alignment of streets imposed by the city's bailiff²⁵. (Pl. 13)

The 1704 plan reveals new elements. The city was surrounded by a wall made of wooden stakes and with bastions and curtains. Here is how Sister Morin describes it, around the same time, in her "Annales de l'Hôtel-Dieu"...

il y a à présent une manière de ville enclosse, de pieux de cèdre de 5 à 6 pieds (français) de haut plantés de terre du bas en haut sont attachés les uns avec les autres avec de gros clous et chevilles de bois et cela depuis dix ans. Voilà les murailles du Canada pour enfermer les villes; il y a plusieurs grandes portes pour entrer et sortir qui sont fermées tous les soirs par des officiers de guerre que le Roy de France y entretient pour nous défandre sy nos ennemis nous voulois inquiéter; ils ouvrent les deux portes le matin à des heures réglées, etc.²⁶.

The map shows that new streets have appeared since 1684, amongst others, those on either side of rue St-Gabriel and parallel to it, rue St-Jean-Baptiste (west) and rue St-Vincent (east). Monsieur Vachon de Belmont, who succeeded Dollier de Casson as head of St-Sulpice Seminary, laid out rue de l'Hôpital in 1702 "pour la décoration et la commodité publique"²⁷. Rue de l'Hôpital is one of the few streets in Ville-Marie which was

not parallel to the original axis on the first layout, probably because it followed a long existing path linking Côte St-Pierre to l'Hôpital de l'Hôtel-Dieu.

Even though the original layout by Dollier de Casson was slightly altered by the addition of these new streets, it nevertheless retained its original character. Notre-Dame Church maintained its predominant position and was now almost completely surrounded by a cemetery. Moreover, the church was increasingly committed to answer the various social needs of the small community: the Hôtel-Dieu had doubled the area occupied by buildings. The Sisters of the Congregation, dedicated to education, had established their convent on the new rue St-Jean-Baptiste, while the Jesuits and the Récollets, true to their rivalry, built at opposite ends of the town, on rue Notre-Dame. These buildings were surrounded by large gardens which in time would constitute the green areas linking the various neighbourhoods. For the time being, "with gardens, vegetables gardens and cultivated plots covering two-thirds of its area", as Lanctôt reminds us²⁸, the city's landscape remained essentially rural.

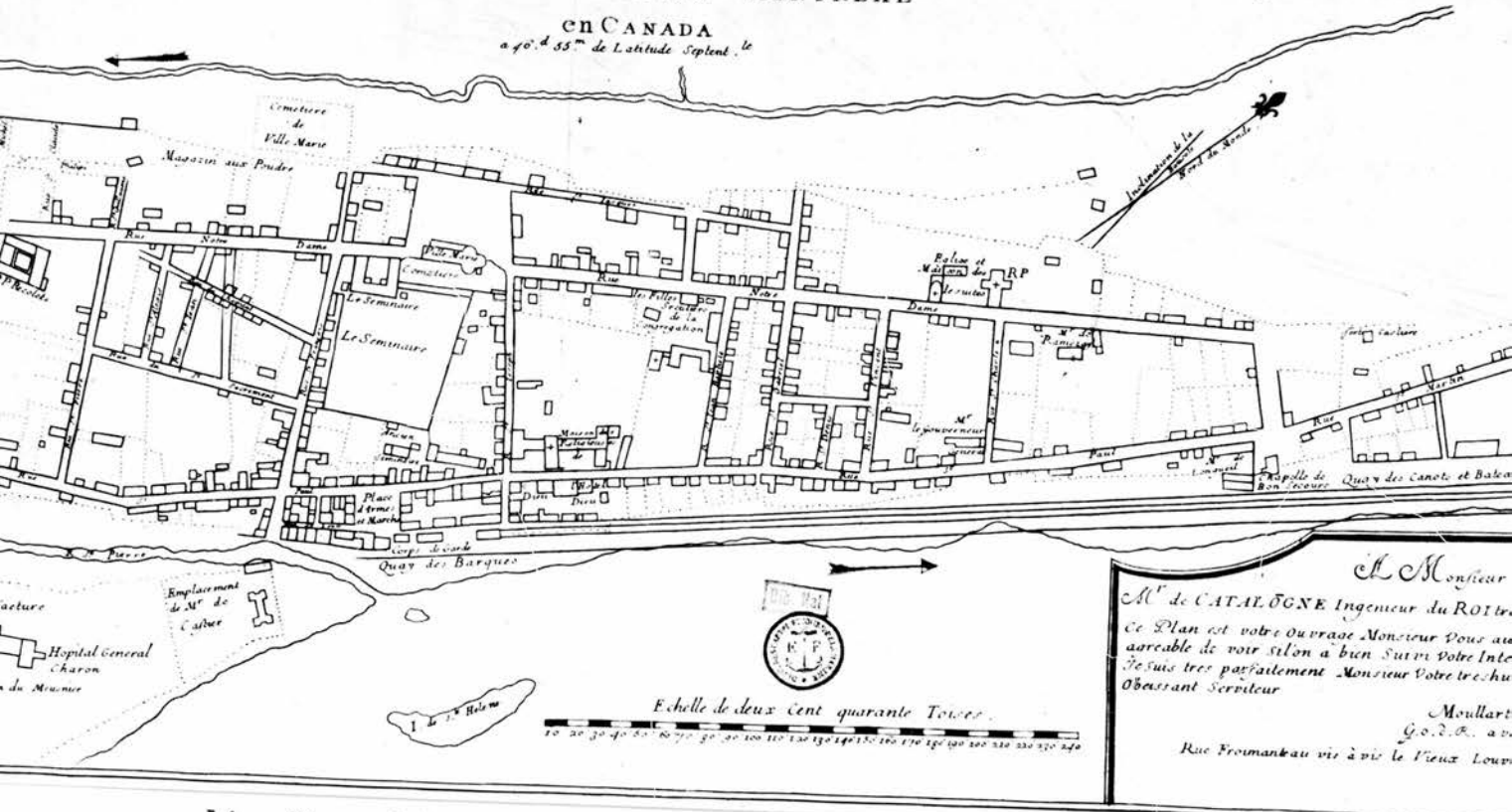
Excellent plans were drawn in the 1720's, most of them by the King's engineers. One set, drawn in 1723 by Monsieur de Catalogne, is remarkable for its neatness as well as for the wealth of information it supplies²⁹. Another set,

drawn the next year by the famous Engineer Chaussegros de Léry, is astonishing, for it produces a three dimensional illusion³⁰. This plan seems to have been used as a basis for others, among them one drawn in 1731 which is almost identical to it and whose author is not known for certain... unless it was by the same Chaussegros de Léry³¹. The latter plans are important, for they enable us to see for the first time the stone fortifications of Montreal. They complement de Catalogne's plans and must therefore be studied together. (Pl. 14 & 15)

In the 1720's, the small settlement had become considerably more urban in character since 1704. Most streets were by now rather well delineated due to the continuous alignment of buildings. Around 1705, Ville-Marie had been renamed Montreal and now numbered 3,000 inhabitants³². Extending to the northeast to include Notre-Dame-de-Bon-Secours Chapel together with "une assez méchante Redoute sur un petit Tertre"³³, later to become the citadel, the fortified town had almost reached a size which would not change until the beginning of the nineteenth century. Some new streets made further cuts into the urban lots, probably on recommendations from Chaussegros de Léry. There were, in his opinion, still too many gardens inside the walls and the number of streets ought to be trebled to accomodate new arrivals. In the last 20 years several streets had appeared on the map, among them,

PLAN DE LA VILLE DE MONTREAL

EN CANADA
à 45° 45' de Latitude Septentr.



14. Plan of the town of Montreal in 1723, by Gédéon de Catalogne

15. Plan of the town of Montreal in 1731, attributed to Chaussegros de Léry.

PLAN DE LA VILLE DE MONTREAL.

Dans la Nouvelle France 1731



St-Alexis, St-Jean and St-Sacrement in the west, and St-Denis, Ste-Thérèse and Bonsecours in the east.

The Lower Town, centered around the Place du Marché, became more urban in character. Father de Charlevoix, who is one of the most serious observers and most prolific commentators who ever visited New France, noted that in 1721 the Lower Town "c'est aussi le Quartier de presque tous les Marchands"³⁴. This was to be expected, for trading took place on the Place du Marché, the annual fur traders' fair was held on the adjacent common and the nearby St. Lawrence River remains the best means of communication with the neighbouring regions, with Quebec, and beyond, with France. On the map drawn by M. de Catalogne and M. de Léry, the concentration of functions by the civil administration is evident. The administration was located in the east end of the small town: the Château de Ramesay (1705) was the residence of the Governor of Montreal, the Château de Vaudreuil (1723-26) was the official residence of the Governor General in town, and the Hangar and Quai du Roi (the King's Warf) were located at the far eastern end.

Due in part to the decisions and activities of the administrators, Montreal gradually lost its character as a simple trading post and assumed a more urban and permanent look as the second half of the eighteenth century approached.

Thus, for instance, following a disastrous fire - the first in a long and sinister list - which destroyed the Hôtel-Dieu and more than 130 houses on June 19, 1721, an ordinance signed by Intendant Bégon on July 8 of the same year forbade the use of wood for the construction of houses in Montreal and recommended the use of stones with roofs covered with non-flammable materials like slate, tile or tin; new houses would have to respect the street alignments and be built with two storeys³⁵. At the beginning these measures were very poorly executed. Kalm, who visited the town in 1749, noted that most houses were built of wood. Later on however, the ordinances must have been applied, for the use of tin to cover roofs would become a visual characteristic of Montreal to a point where it was nicknamed the "cité d'argent" (the "silver town")³⁶. Even today, roofs shining in the sun are one of the most striking visual features of the old villages along both shores of the St. Lawrence River.

No study of Montreal in the 1720's would be complete without a description of the stone fortifications appearing on de Léry's plans. He was in charge of building the fortifications since 1716. A simple stone wall, 18 feet high, 4 feet wide at the foot and 3 feet wide at the top was built with curtains and 13 bastions; on the outside, the walls were protected by sloping banks and by a moat eight feet deep. Four

main gates gave access to the town: Porte des Récollets to the west, at the end of rue Notre-Dame, Porte St-Laurent, the only one on the St-Martin creek side, Porte St-Martin to the east and at the end of rue St-Paul, and Porte du Port, on the St. Lawrence River side, giving direct access to the Place du Marché. Later on, more gates would be added on the river side, a fact which reasserts the river's importance as a communication route. There would also be a gate at the end of nearly every street: Porte Ste-Marie at the end of rue St-Joseph, and Porte de Lachine at the end of rue St-François-Xavier.³⁷

It has often been said that these fortifications were modelled after Vauban's. This is not quite true and certainly does not do justice to the French engineer's genius. Louisbourg was certainly much more likely to merit the title of New France's "Ville à la Vauban". Vauban's own fortifications, whether Longwy, Neuf-Brisach or any other fortified town, displayed such refinement of technique and were so complex and so vast that they would by themselves provide all the protection a town needed. Lavedan cites Huningue as an example: the area covered by its fortifications was at least eight times as wide as that covered by the town proper.³⁸ This certainly was not the case in Montreal, where the fortifications could hardly stop an assault by the natives and certainly not assaults by an army equipped with contemporary weapons. Two

reasons account for this fact. The walls were extremely fragile and extended too far and thus required a considerable army to cover all points. Moreover, because of the steep topography of the St-Louis hillside, most buildings in the town rose above the top of the wall and were exposed, without any defence, to the artillery shooting either from the river or from the land.

Chaussegros de Léry should not be held responsible for the mediocrity of the fortifications. He was no genius, but he was a good engineer and revelled in military construction work. He was, after all, Sebastien Vauban's pupil and protégé. He had written an eight-volume Traité de fortifications (Treatise on Fortifications) with about one hundred drawings on "tout ce qui regarde la manière de fortifier les places, les attaquer et les défendre"³⁹. Only lack of money prevented him from publishing his treatise.

The real reason for the poor quality of construction was that Montrealers were not very interested in fortifications, mainly because they had to pay for a substantial part of the costs of erecting them. They were accustomed to skirmishes in which personal adroitness would be the decisive factor, and they were convinced that their valour was better than any fortification. Unlike the ruling class, with its typical European logic, they were unable to see Montreal as a link

within a defence system, which, in the mind of the decision makers took precedence over all group and private interests. To the inhabitants, Montreal's calling was not military but commercial. Aside from the invasions by the natives, Montrealers never resisted foreign invaders; on the contrary, they seemed to welcome them, inasmuch as it benefited their economic interests⁴⁰.

From 1730 until the British Conquest, there are fewer good cartographical documents. There is a plan of Montreal from 1745 which Lanctôt mentions, but it appears to be a British copy of a French original, itself attributed to Chaussegros de Léry⁴¹. Except for the appearance of suburbs around the fortified town, there is little to be said about the 1745 plan that has not already been said about the maps of 1723, 1724 and 1731. More on the suburbs later.

There are some plans and views of Montreal dating back to the 1760's; most documents are of an even quality and drawn by the British invaders. Their purpose is obvious; they have just conquered New France and want the British citizenry to behold the prize of so many sacrifices, both in men and in money. Therefore, they are not above exaggerating the importance of the conquered booty, allowing imagination to compensate for the shortcomings of reality. Thus the "View of the Town and Fortifications of Montreal, in Canada", published in

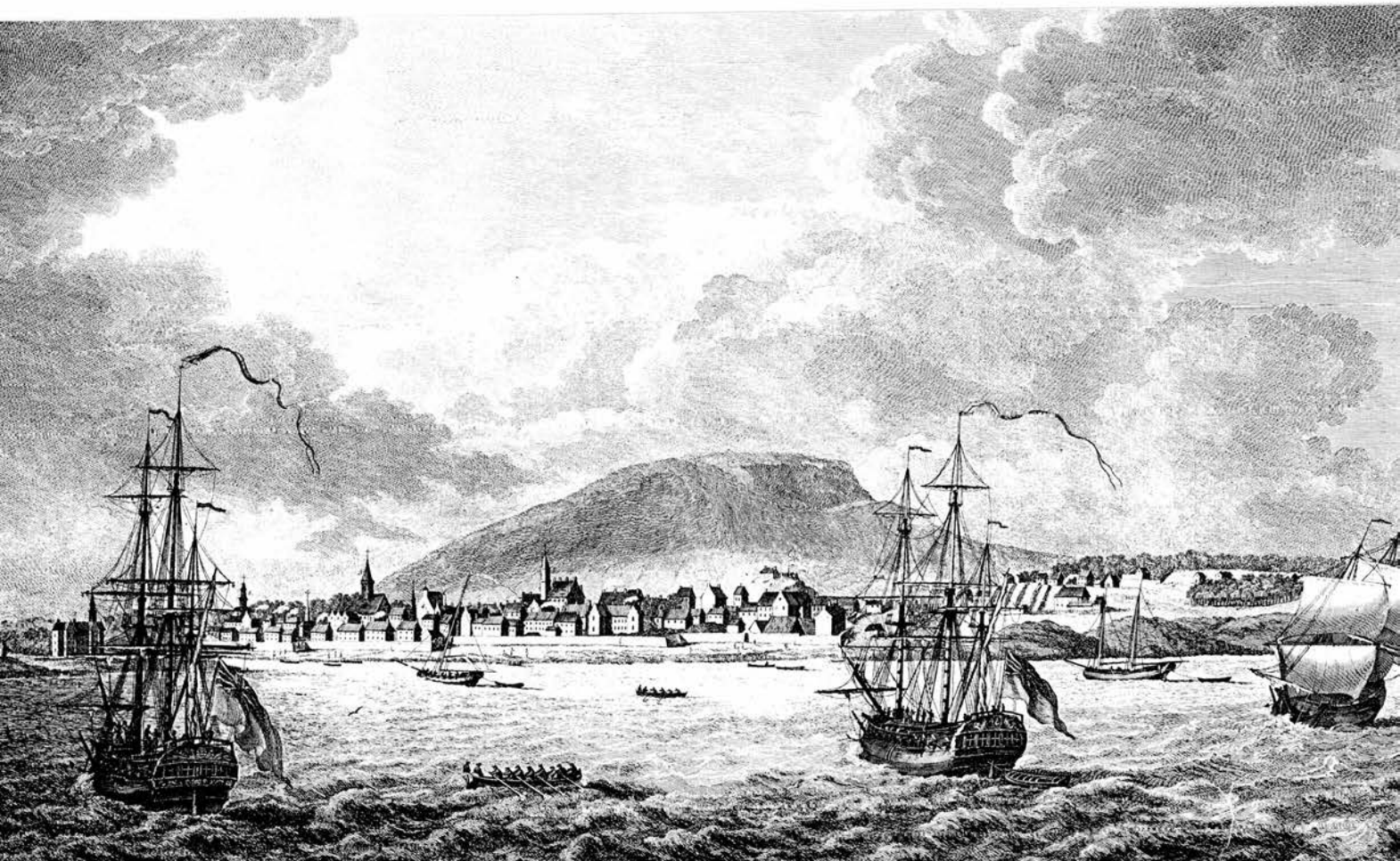
the Royal Magazine in London is pure fancy. It reduces Montreal to a strange cluster of military barracks protected by a powerful wall dotted with as many cannons as there are battlements, the whole picture being dominated by the massive constructions of the Jesuits' establishment!⁴² Certain plans should be read with the same caution. The "Plan and View of the Town and Fortifications of Montreal in Canada", published by the Great Magazine of London in October 1760, is probably but a poor copy of the famous map by Thomas Jeffreys published in 1758, which was itself but a copy of a previous French plan⁴³. The last plan of Montreal of the old regime was drawn by the sculptor Paul Labrosse in 1761 and it is considered authentic by several learned specialists, among them Massicotte⁴⁴. (Pl. 16)

On the Labrosse plan, new streets have appeared: St-Nicolas, St-Eloi, de la Capitale, St-Gilles, which were created to fulfill Chaussegros de Léry's wish to accommodate new citizens, without altering the original intent of Dollier de Casson's plan. One striking feature which appears on this plan is that the city has begun to develop outside the fortified wall. Three main suburbs appear on the plan: St-Joseph, with access to the town via the Porte des Récollets, St-Laurent, on the street bearing the same name, and Quebec, developing in the east and taking its name from its location on the



16. Plan of the town of Montreal in 1761, by Paul Labrosse, with additions by E.-Z. Massicotte.

17. View of Montreal in 1762, by Thomas Patten.



road to Quebec. Streets outside the city gradually aligned themselves to the main axis, like rue St-Laurent, and according to the traditional subdivision of land.

Population density is one among several reasons accounting for the fact that people settled outside the town walls. Was there in fact more building land inside the walls? Because of a lack of data, it is not easy to determine the population density of the small town at the end of the French Regime. The 1761 census counted 5,500 inhabitants in the town of Montreal and the 1765 census counted 900 dwellings in the town⁴⁵. Whether these figures refer to the population living within the walls or whether it includes all or part of the population from the suburbs is not known. They probably include Montreal and the surrounding suburbs. Whatever the case, even if the total population were living inside the walls, its density would still not be excessive. The inner town covered some 90 acres: this would mean a gross density of some 60 inhabitants per acre. If one excludes the gardens and the vegetable gardens belonging to the various civil and religious institutions, which covered at least 12 acres, the net density rises to 70 inhabitants per acre, a figure which is not excessive by modern standards, and even reasonable by the standards of those days. Without making any formal comparison between Montreal and the small French towns of those days, we

can show that the population density in Montreal was relatively low in the 18th century: cities like Rouen, Caudebec, Troyes or Annecy numbered but 35 to 45 residences per acre⁴⁶. Even if all the 900 dwellings mentioned in the 1765 census were located within the walls, the gross figure would still only amount to 10 residences per acre.

The first realistic general view of Montreal was drawn by Thomas Patten, a skilled British officer in the Army of General Amherst; it is dated 1762 and confirms the low population density of Montreal at the end of the French Regime. On Patten's document, most dwellings are two storeys high; including attics, they are $2\frac{1}{2}$ storeys high. Had the fortifications truly constituted an obstacle to expansion, the town would have certainly expanded upward, as was the case in several fortified medieval towns in Europe, like Edinburgh. In fact, even though Montreal was growing increasingly urban in character, the town nevertheless retained rural dimensions as well as some of its rural characteristics. To wit, the ordinances of Intendant Monrepos, who as late as 1746 or 1747 and even 1755 kept reminding the citizens not to allow their pigs to wander through the streets of the town⁴⁷. This suggests that both agriculture and breeding were still practised to a degree in the town. Yet, the beautiful and fertile land around the town must have incited several inhabitants to settle

outside the walls. Moreover, the natives had not been a threat for the last 50 years and the Treaty of Utrecht of 1713 had established peace with foreign nations. The attraction of the rural suburbs was strong: indeed, the seemingly endless stretches of land were at the gates, with no insurmountable barriers to reach them. (Pl. 17)

Such was, in brief, the topographical growth of Montreal during the first century of its existence and during the last century of French rule in America. The conquerors of 1760 would bring new cultural values with them, which would in time leave their imprint on the city's physical appearance. Before dealing with that subject, we wish to turn our attention to a more thorough analysis of the morphological character of Montreal during French colonization, in an attempt to bring out the various forces and influences which shaped the city's development.

3. Medievalism and Classicism

The fortified Town of Montreal of the 1760's as it appears on the Labrosse plan was the result of the interaction of two dynamic components: an original layout and the ensuing development. The initial plan of 1672 by Dollier de Casson was the first component, an outline for development. Let us summarize that plan once more: an orthogonal layout of streets, dividing the area into unequal rectangles with the

market place and the parish church polarizing their activities at either end of the town. The church "qui a bien plus l'air d'une cathédrale que celle de Québec"⁴⁸ to quote Charlevoix, was the most significant socio-cultural determinant as well as the most imposing physical structure in the small town. The socio-cultural significance of the church was even symbolized by its dominant position near the highest point of the crest of Coteau St-Louis. It was located in the middle of Notre-Dame Street, the most important street in town which Dollier de Casson deliberately drew wider than any other street. The convergence of such facts is not without significance.

The second dynamic component is developmental. From the original scheme of 1672, the settlement progressed in an organic manner with diversifying forms and functions. The various organs of collective life soon appeared inside the settlement: civil and religious buildings multiplied, clustering around distinctive centres, private dwellings progressively filled the urban lots and streets gradually took shape.

As they appeared at the end of the old regime, when they had attained a certain degree of maturity, the morphological characteristics of the town resembled those of the small European towns of the Middle Ages. This is hardly surprising if one considers the kind of economic, social and cultural climate in which New France took shape. This is not

specific to the French colony judging from its statement by Louis Mumford:

So far from giving birth to a new life, the settlement of the northern American seaboard prolonged for a little while the social habits and economic institutions which were fast crumbling away in Europe, particularly in England. In the villages of the New World there flickered up the last dying embers of the medieval order⁴⁹.

It is undeniable that the dominant structures of Montreal in the 1760's did in fact reflect the economic, social and cultural structures of a medieval town: fortifications for the defence and protection of the community, a market place at the center for trade and social interactions and a parish church with its steeple rising above all other structures in town, attesting to the commanding role of the church in society⁵⁰. The church's role was not limited to the spiritual world. As in the Middle Ages in Europe, the church in New France and in Montreal took care of the physical and social welfare of the community. Religious institutions like the Hospital of the Grey Nuns and the Hôtel-Dieu Hospital, the convents of The Sisters of the Congregation, of the Récollets and of the Jesuits, all dedicated to education and predication, clearly point to the irreplaceable role of the church in the organization of the social structure of those days. The close links binding

the civil and religious powers were another legacy of the medieval structures. Thus, the Sulpicians constituted both the spiritual and seignorial authority in Montreal: the Seminary about which Charlevoix remarked that "on ne laisse pourtant pas de sentir que c'est la Maison Seigneuriale" was located next to the parish church⁵¹.

The legacy of a medieval mentality and of a medieval social organization may account for the organic development of Montreal as a homogenous entity with the main characteristics of a small medieval town. Yet, when one considers the original plan of 1672, one may wonder why Dollier de Casson imposed this particular type of orthogonal grid of streets on the Côteau St-Louis, apart from the fact that the alignment of certain streets may have been dictated by pre-existing conditions. There is no satisfactory answer to this question, let alone a definitive answer. Eighteenth century France may have been among the most advanced nations of Europe in the field of town planning, but unlike Spain, it had not laid out definite rules and principles of town planning for the construction of colonial towns and outposts⁵².

In order to trace the influences which governed the layout of French colonial towns in America, one must probe into the personality and intentions of the colonizers. Dollier de Casson, however, did not record his intentions. He had a

rich, versatile personality and it would be difficult to find out what his intentions were. Indeed, he first became a captain in the Army, then a priest, later on an explorer in America, then Seigneur of the Island of Montreal, an excellent diplomat and Montreal's first historian; then an architect and town planner of a sort and even an engineer, when he became the first to elaborate projects and plans for the Lachine Canal. There is no doubt about one particular point: he was familiar with the architectural and town planning concepts of his time. He was a young nobleman, born in 1636 at the Château de Casson on the Erdre River in Lower Brittany, and hence probably received a solid education which usually included some artistic formation. He had been a captain in the cavalry under the Great Turenne and his travels throughout Europe may have brought him in contact with past or contemporary architectural works. One must keep in mind that the classical Vitry-le-François was then only one century old and that the great Sébastien de Vauban (1633-1707) was a contemporary of François Dollier (1636-1701)⁵³. How were such probably or possible influences reflected in the plan he drew in 1672?

From the layout of some of the colonial towns, it appears that the orthogonal grid is particularly well suited for urban settlements in a new or hostile environment. He could cite some of the Greek colonial towns like Miletus or

Prienae, Roman towns like Timgad, towns from Southern Russia and European medieval colonial towns; colonial towns in America, like St. Augustin's in Florida, founded by the Spaniards, or Philadelphia, founded by the British. Dollier de Casson, with his good military background, knew that the best way to pitch a military camp was to line up the tents in straight, parallel rows. Such a disposition makes for easier inspection, faster and more orderly assembling of troops and swifter defensive action in case of attack. In the Middle Ages, the plans of the new colonial towns called "bastides" point to an identical solution. In certain respects, the "bastides" resembled the original plan of Montreal.

The "bastide", which in the Provençal language means a fortress, is a small fortified colonial town. Most bastides were free towns with market privileges, where a prince or seigneur would attract colonists by granting them privileges. They were founded with a definite purpose in mind: to bolster the financial assets of a seigneur, or to allow him to extend his jurisdiction over foreign or hostile territories, to consolidate a military or political domination over conquered territories or to protect borders. In Europe, bastides are found mainly in territories which have been contested by rival powers. There are found in southern Spain, and also in southwestern France, between the Pyrenees and the Dordogne, in a

country which had been for a long time the object of wars between the Dukes of Toulouse, the ^{English} British (during the 100 year war) and the French from the northern kingdom; they may also be found on the borders which England shares with Wales and Scotland; they are even found in northern Ireland⁵⁴. There seems to be an interesting similarity between the conditions which prevailed at the time of the creation of "bastides" in the troubled Europe of the Middle Ages and the creation of certain French towns in America, particularly Montreal on the St. Lawrence River. Indeed, the creation of Ville-Marie on the Coteau St-Louis in 1672, in the middle of a savage war with natives who were bent on ridding the island on the white invaders, does resemble the occupation of hostile territory.

One should not use the "bastide" of Monpazier in Dordogne, France, as a basis for a comparison between the European - and especially French - "bastides" and Montreal under the French regime. The "bastide" of Monpazier is exceptional, a fact which accounts for its fame. It was founded in 1284, and the rigidity, symmetry and regularity of its plan reveal the ideal conditions of its well-planned settlement. Apart from the characteristic structures of a medieval town such a fortification, a market place and a church, it had few common features with Montreal.

According to Lavedan, the numerous French bastides

present a great variety of plans and shapes, depending on the site or other conditions. Many, particularly among those founded towards the end of the 13th century, were laid out according to orthogonal plans, but unlike Monpazier, without any geometrical rigidity. Streets crossed more or less at right angles and the urban lots thus created were relatively irregular in shape, but of variable dimensions, as in Montreal. Ville-Marie's original checkerboard plan designed by Casson, the military Sulpician, resembled more closely the plans of bastides like Beaumont-en-Périgord, Monségur, Puymirol, Valence-du-Gers, Villefranche de Belvès, and several others⁵⁵. (Fig. 7)

The location was often the determining factor in the layout of certain bastides: this is true of Montreal. The elongated, almost linear layout of the plan was determined by the Coteau St-Louis, with its steep crest locked between the river, the St-Martin Creek and swamp land in the northwest. On the other hand, when the site was free of any topographical limitations, the colonial French town in America tended to be closely patterned after the geometrical model of the bastide of Monpazier. This is the case of the diminutive town of Three-Rivers as it is depicted on an anonymous plan of 1704. The Fort of Detroit, founded in 1701 on the Detroit River between Lake Erie and Lake St. Claire, provides a more striking example. It is a small fortified town, with an extremely regular layout

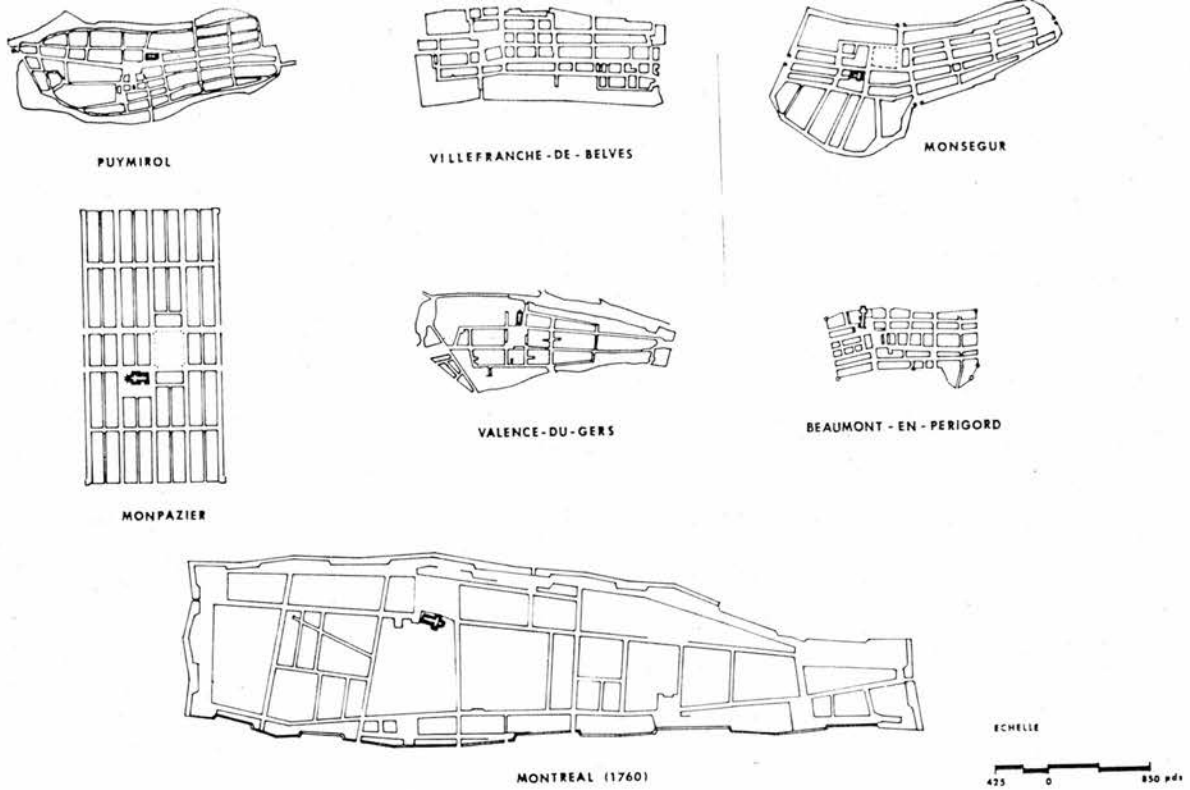
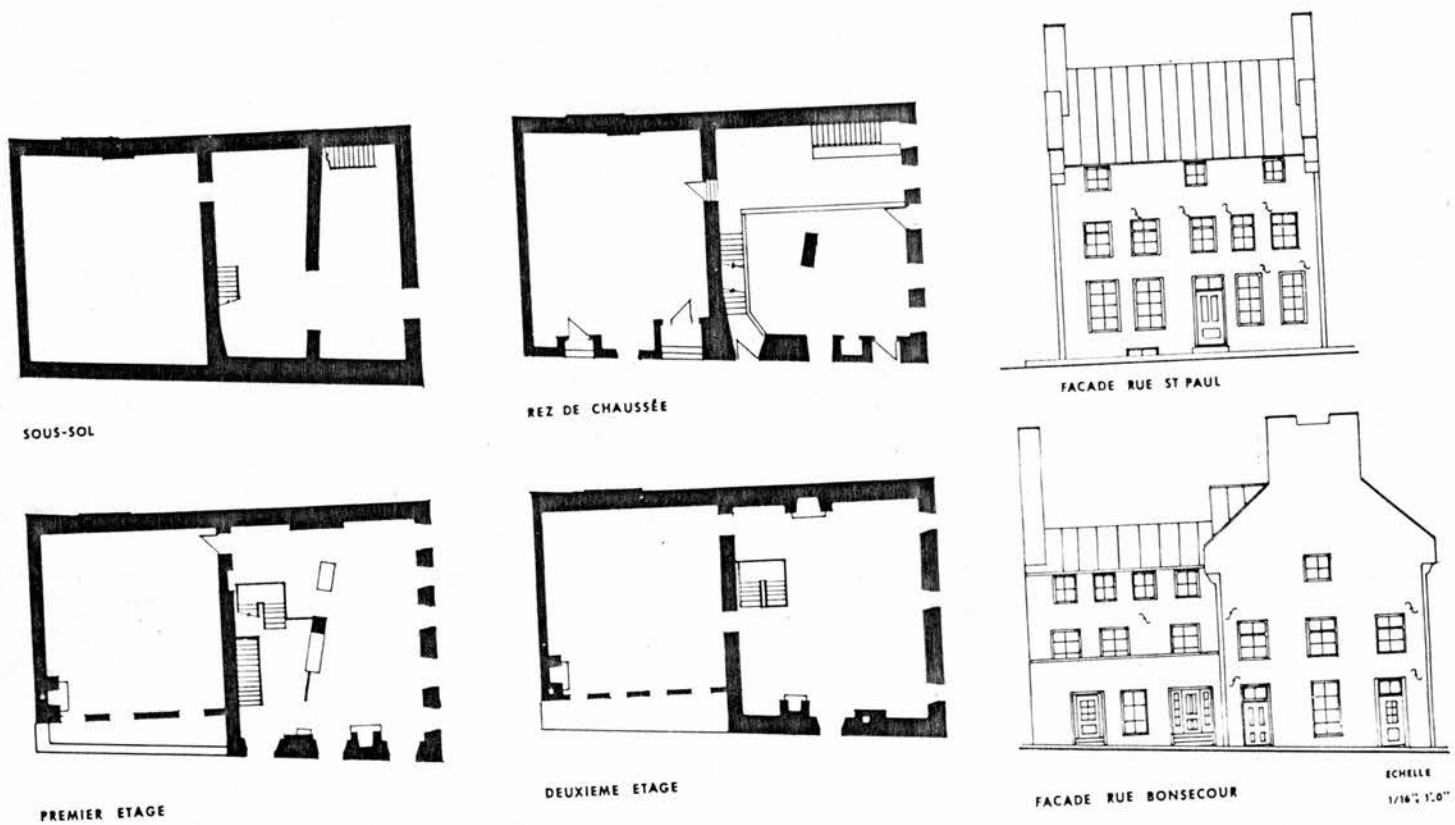


Fig. 7 Comparison of the plan of Montreal during the French régime with the plans of some bastides.

Fig. 8 Maison du Calvet, Old Montreal.



and perfectly perpendicular streets forming rectangular lots of almost equal dimensions. As in Monpazier, there is a certain hierarchy in the width of its streets. Its founder, Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac, came from Gasconne in south-western France⁵⁶.

It is a remarkable fact that among French settlements in America, identical natural sites seemed to have dictated similar solutions to the town planners. Indeed, in most cases where a site displayed the same features and topographical restrictions as Côteau St-Louis, the plans for the town to be erected were similar to the plan of Montreal. This was the case with Quebec's Lower Town, locked between the river and the cliff. This was also the case, under the French regime, with St. Louis, Mobile and New Orleans. It is very likely that the plans for these towns, founded later than Montreal, were inspired by Montreal's layout. This is hardly surprising, for Mobile's and New Orleans' founder, the Sieur Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne de Bienville (1680-1768) was born in Montreal and had lived there⁵⁷.

If there was a connection between the plans and the layout of certain French bastides and those of Montreal under the old regime, there was however no transposition. They may have been similar on the whole, but they were marked by significant differences. Scale was one difference. Chaussegros

de Léry's fortified Montreal covered at least twice the area of the bastides of Monpazier and Puymiról, three times that of Valence-du-Gers and seven times that of Beaumont-en-Périgord. Dollier de Casson's initial plan was not as ambitious, but the lots between the streets were very wide. The lot which was originally bounded by St-Pierre, Notre-Dame, St-François and St-Paul Streets covered an area of about 10 acres, almost the total area of the bastide of Beaumont-en-Périgord, which was itself divided into about 30 blocks. Such a difference in scale may be explained by the fact that concessions to private citizens on Coteau St-Louis were very generous. The concessions made to Pierre Gadois in 1648 and to Robert le Cavalier in 1654 were each two arpents wide and each by 15 and 20 arpents long respectively as we have seen earlier. These concessions seem to have constituted decisive factors in the creation of several lots. In 1672, Ville-Marie must have been designed both as an agricultural centre and as an urban community. Only demographic pressures and the instigations of the authorities (Chaussegros de Léry, among others) managed to gradually reduce the individual parcels inside the walls to proportions which were more in keeping with an urban settlement. It is interesting to note that the scale, the plan, the shape and the very spirit of the traditional bastide should find its natural place in the lower town, around the market place, where

the merchants' activities are essentially urban in character. Indeed, the market place of a bastide covered an area near the centre of the town, which was considerable in comparison with the town's total area: this was one of the bastide's main features, especially in southern France. Moreover, the church was rarely built close to the market place. Usually the church was erected on another square, or sometimes on the street relatively far away from the central market place. Thus, in a bastide, the prevalence of trade was evident from the prominence of the market place⁵⁸. In Montreal, under the old regime, the reverse was true: while the market place closely resembled that of the typical bastide with its rectilinear outline and its streets located at the corners, it did not cover as large an area as the Place d'Armes adjacent to the parish church. Moreover, the very location of the market place in the lower town subordinated it to the church's public square. Dollier de Casson intended that Ville-Marie should be a religious enterprise, dedicated to religious ends. This is obvious from the location of the parish church and of the church square at the top of Coteau St-Louis and in the middle of the town's main street.

When he used an open space in the middle of a road to make a visual display of the parish church, the Sulpician was resorting to the town planners' language of his time,

which was more a legacy of the Renaissance than of the Middle Ages. In a bastide or in a medieval town in general, no public square or street was ever used to show a cathedral, a church or any structure. When it did happen, it was as a result of successive organic transformations, dictated by needs and opportunities rather than as a result of a preconceived intention. Thus, it appears that some people in New France were aware of the traditions of classicism both in town planning and in architecture. As a model, Ville-Marie had its limitation, but placed in its proper perspective as an achievement in the context of the colony, it deserves to be mentioned.

How did the Renaissance's heritage find its way to America? As established earlier, it was part of the cultural background of the ruling class, the only class to intervene in the planning of the environment, and of which Dollier de Casson was a good representative. The Comte de Frontenac, as we have seen, was imbued with classical concepts of planning and he would certainly have made use of such concepts, had the opportunity arisen. There was, however, another source for the diffusion of the gospel of classicism in America, which may have left its mark in an indirect manner on the creation of French towns. It was the very significant Spanish colonial experience on the North American continent.

All the Spanish colonial towns in the New World

were planned according to the principles and rules laid down in the "Laws of the Indies", a collection of royal ordinances promulgated by Philip II of Spain in 1573. They reflected the long urban tradition of Spain, which was being gradually infiltrated by the spirit of the Renaissance. To mention but one example, the ordinances stipulated that when a coastal town was created, the public square was to be located near the shore that the church's door were to open out to the square, that the main structures representing the civil and religious authorities were to figure prominently on the public square, etc., etc..⁵⁹ The orthogonal plan of the lower town in Quebec City, with an open market place in front of the church, does remind one of some of the ordinances from the "Laws of the Indies". A similar influence may be found in the first tentative plans for Ste-Croix Island by Samuel de Champlain, who was later to found Quebec. Is there a causal relationship? One must remember that, from 1599 to 1601, Champlain had visited the most important Spanish settlements in America, among them Mexico, San Juan, Vera Cruz, Porto Bello, St. Domingo, Panama, and Havana. His exact role in the planning of the lower town in Quebec is not known. A XVIIIth century plan of the town of St. Augustin in Florida shows an orthogonal grid of streets, and a central market and parade square with a church prominently placed on that square. A glance at that map reveals

noticeable resemblances to the plan of Quebec's lower town and to a lesser degree to that of Montreal under the old regime.

Did Dollier de Casson know the "Laws of the Indies" which governed the creation of Spanish colonial towns? He might have had in mind some of the French towns like Vitry-le-François, Charleville; he might also have remembered some of Vauban's achievements. The concepts behind the Spanish colonial towns were not all that different from Vauban's. He might also have been inspired by the plan of Quebec's lower town, which he had certainly seen. We have no information which would allow us to answer these questions. One thing is certain though: there was a vast choice of sources of inspiration from which he might have drawn.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, two traditions prevailed in Montreal under the French regime. The initial plan seemed to issue from the concept of the medieval bastide. This is not a particular characteristic of French settlements in America, for it is also found in British and Spanish towns and outposts, a fact which is not surprising. Indeed, in the Middle Ages, various nations looked upon the bastides as a new way of dealing with the occupation of threatened, hostile or newly acquired land. It was only natural for such nations to resort to a similar solution when faced with a

similar situation in America. In fact, without prior consultation, and one could say almost subconsciously, various colonizers seemed to have displayed a common attitude when faced with the task of creating towns and outposts in the New World. On the other hand, each one of these nations carried with itself the contemporary national tradition of its ruling class which, at the time was imbued with Renaissance and classicism. One must therefore expect to find some of these traditions in the physical structures of their colonial towns. Besides, one may ask, how much does the nature of a bastide differ from that of a "Ville à la Vauban"? Might it not be said of Vauban's towns that they constituted the state of the art of the bastide? This remains to be seen. We now turn our attention to the architectural components of Montreal at the end of the XVIIth century and during the XVIIIth century.

ARCHITECTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
IN THE FRONTIER TOWN

Nos ancêtres étaient donc des hommes simples, réfléchis, prévoyants. Ils se sont créé un art à leur juste mesure; un art si compréhensible, si bien ordonné, fait de si peu de choses, qu'il a fleuri pendant près de deux siècles... Gérard Morisset.¹

1. The Architectural Heritage of the Old Regime

Contrary to popular belief, there are very few buildings in Old Montreal that date back to the French regime. In fact, one could easily count them on the fingers of one hand: there are five or six at the most. As it is sometimes very difficult to place the exact date of certain buildings, it is almost impossible to confirm this small number. For instance, a part of the old General Hospital of the Grey Nuns in the Normand-St-Pierre block, may date back to the French colonial era, to the early days of the Charon Brothers, around 1692 or 1694. However, this is true only of some of the walls; the hospital was destroyed in a fire in 1765 and only the undamaged walls were used for reconstruction.² One faces a similar problem in the case of the house of Calvet (occupied today by Ogilvy's and restored by them in 1966). It is supposed to be one of Montreal's oldest existing residences and to have been built before 1725. An analysis of historical maps

would establish that the north-east corner of Bonsecours and St-Paul Streets seem to have been constructed as early as 1723. Nevertheless, it is still difficult to say whether this is the same building. Finally, if Pierre du Calvet, who settled in Montreal in 1767, did in fact live there, this house must have been constructed before or around that period. One building which certainly belonged to the old regime is the Old Seminary of St-Sulpice on Notre-Dame Street. The central part was probably erected around 1683 or 1684, and it is clearly indicated on maps of 1684 and 1704. However, the wings only appear on the maps of 1723 and 1724 drawn by engineers de Catalogne and Chaussegros de Léry. One thing is certain: the date 1740 engraved on the frieze of the central door indicates the date of construction of the classical style portico, rather than the date of erection of the old main building.³

In fact, the famous Château de Ramesay is perhaps the only urban building in Montreal from the French regime for which we have a definite date for the start of construction: 1705. A masonry contract signed on the 27th April 1705 between M. de Ramesay and Pierre Couturier, "maître-maçon et architecte", confirms this date. The contract stipulated that the "maison sera de soixante-six pieds de long de dehors en dehors et de trente-six pieds de large aussy"⁴ all in French measurement.⁵ These measurements are much smaller than those of today's

buildings. The solution to the enigma lies in another agreement, signed on August 24, 1755 between the Sieur Paul Texier La Vigne, Master Mason and Contractor, and a Mr. Deschambault, General Agent for the "Compagnie des Indes", which owned the Château since 1745. Indeed, the latter contract refers to "le Rétablissement et augmentation de Lhotel de La Comp(agnie) scize En cette Ville Rue Notre-Dame de quatre Vingt douze Pieds de Longs sur quarante huit Pieds de Large"⁶, measurements which approximate the present dimensions of the building, but excluding the ugly extension of 1830 and 1906.⁷ What is left of the original construction of 1705? How did the 1755 renovations alter the architectural features of the previous building? These questions would be hard to answer and, at any rate, are not of great significance for this study. It is often claimed that the style and architectural features of the Château de Ramesay date back to 1705 when in fact they are more likely to date back to 1755; such claims may lead to erroneous conclusions. One might reach the conclusion that the Château, far from being the first known example of a detached house with fire-breaking gables, typical of the Montreal region according to Traquair,⁸ would in fact be a more prestigious example of a kind of domestic architecture, already widespread at the time in Montreal and in the vicinity.

People tend to believe that several buildings

still existing in Old Montreal date back to the French colonial era, probably because these buildings display the features of the distinctive popular architecture of that era, while they were in fact built up to a century later. La Maison du Patriote, on St-Paul Street, la Maison de la Sauvegarde, on Notre-Dame Street, and la Maison Truteau, on St-Gabriel Street, are among the best examples of this type. Other examples include The Youville Stables, built around 1820 and the pleasant cluster at the north-east corner of Place Jacques-Cartier and St-Paul Street which were probably built between 1800 and 1850.

These buildings are the products of an artisan tradition which extended far beyond the conquest. Indeed, if the character of public architecture was altered by the change of allegiance, it would be wrong to think that popular architecture also suddenly changed. The contemporary fashions in French architecture had been unable to draw out a traditional art deeply rooted in centuries of an educational system controlled by the guilds. In a like manner, the British conquest did not have any immediate influences on the way of conceiving and building private dwellings. On the contrary, apart from forcing an already conservative population to further strengthen its bonds, the conquest caused some of the acquired traditions to crystalize. Some residences did reflect the influences of

the new occupants, like McTavish House, but most perpetuated the ancestral attitudes and ways until the middle of the XIXth century and beyond. It is for this reason that such urban dwellings will be integrated into our study of the architectural heritage of the French regime.

Finally, a word about Notre-Dame-de-Bonsecours Chapel. Contrary to public belief, it does not date back to the French colonial period. The present chapel has been erected on the location of the previous one which had been built in 1675 and was destroyed by fire in 1754; at best, only parts of the first walls were used for reconstruction. The new chapel was somewhat larger than the previous one; it was erected from 1771 onwards and must have looked like the earlier one: the same restraint, the same soaring volume and the same architectural expressions resulting from the happy marriage of two traditions prevailed. There were pointed gables, arched doors and windows, protruding corner stones, a circular bull's eye, basket handle vaults, and the interior was decorated in the traditional manner of our wood sculptors. Unfortunately its simplicity of form and taste was very vulnerable to the rules of romanticism at the end of the 19th century. Moreover, the chapel was a place of pilgrimage and, as such, became a particular symbol for a nation which made no distinction between faith and nationalism. As could be expected, the symbol was enlivened

at the expense of architecture. For a decade, from 1886 to 1894, it suffered repeated alterations meant to embellish it, but which in fact were an insult to good taste. The interior was rough-cast and redecorated; the exterior was loaded with towers, turrets, bell-turrets, statues, galleries, ex-votos, etc. With the blessing of the church it ended up looking like a bazaar; it was now a credit to the lack of taste of the romantic period and was thus no longer characteristic of French colonial architecture⁹.

Outside the boundaries of the old fortified city, there are few structures dating back to the French regime on the Island of Montreal. The oldest are the two towers of the Grand Séminaire, on Sherbrooke Street West, which are the last vestiges of the "Fort des Messieurs". Erected in 1694 by l'Abbé de Belmont, the turrets were part of a group of four located at the corners of a stone wall which protected the Sulpician's mission on the mountain. The house of "la Ferme St-Gabriel" which is discussed later in this chapter, is located in Pointe St-Charles; the central part was built in 1698, and constitutes another legacy from the end of the 17th century. Some time later, early in 1700, a windmill was built in Pointe-aux-Trembles: it is in a deplorable state today. Finally, one of the only buildings from that era is the Church of the Visitation at Sault-au-Récollet, with its main building of stone

work dating back to the year 1749-1750.

It is probable that sections of buildings and even whole buildings dating back to the French regime are still existing, mainly among the old houses found along the old Kingsways of the island's "côtes", like Côte St-Antoine. Short of very patient searches through notaries' records to trace the building contracts and property transfer documents, it would be very difficult to date the old dwellings. In the country as well as in the town, old concepts and methods of construction for private dwellings were perpetuated until the 1900's. The relative degree of adaptation of such buildings to the environment and to climatic conditions would constitute the only valid criterion of reference to establish the date of construction.

A word of caution, before undertaking a more intensive study of such buildings. They must not be judged according to the criteria of conventional aesthetics. Such an excessively exclusive approach accounts for Traquair's assertion that

Montreal never seems to have had any public buildings of any architectural importance, and today very little survives from the French regime. The old seminary of St. Sulpice... is a plain building with only an amusing little clock belfry and an ionic doorporch. The Château de Ramesay is simply a big house¹⁰.

Architecture with a capital "A", a subtle blend of functionalism, solidity and beauty is too rigidly tied to established rules for it to apply to colonial architecture. After all, Montreal under the old regime was not exactly a cultural centre: it was a frontier town, a pioneer settlement, exposed to the harshness of the continent and to the hatred of the natives; it was a trading post, a transit centre where people tried their luck and often saw their hopes dashed. Compared to Quebec it was the new town, and its traders were setting an example of daring and boldness for the industrialists of the future, rushing to the conquest of new values under the aegis of men, ideas and influences which seemed out of place in such a small settlement. How different from Quebec! Quebec was the capital, the administrative center, the seat of the episcopate, a port through which all ideas, fashions and European influences filtered before reaching Montreal. Quebec was the guardian of the values of an old civilisation attempting to tame the new continent: Quebec was essentially traditionalist and conservative. The colonist who had visited Quebec with its ramparts, its Jesuits' church and college and the Bishop's palace must have found Montreal very rough indeed! Quebec was nostalgic Old France; Montreal, less ostentatious and more down-to-earth, was the New France.

We are most interested in the changes brought

about by the adaptation of the old European architecture to the new physical environment. Any building displaying such characteristics should be considered for a study of this nature and we intend to select a few examples in the field of public and domestic architecture. Each example shall be examined on its own first and then within the context of its own urban environment.

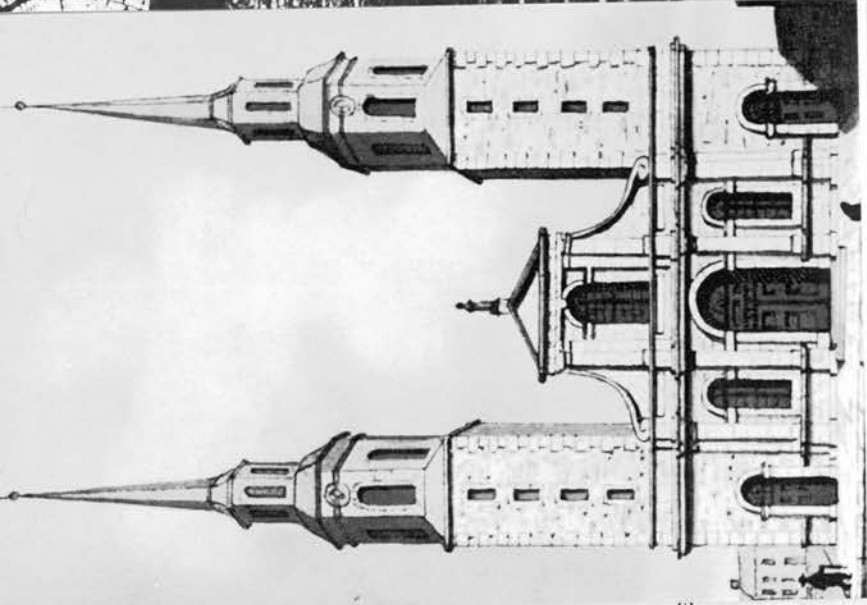
2. Public Architecture

The parish Church of Notre-Dame was designed by François Dollier de Casson and built by a contractor and master-mason named François Bailli¹¹. Only a few sketches by Lambert, Drake and Spoule are still extant. Construction started in the middle of Notre-Dame Street, in 1672, and the church was completed some ten years later. It became the second most important church in the colony after the Cathedral of Quebec. Father de Charlevoix, who visited Montreal in 1721, after the church was enlarged in 1708 by the Sulpician Vachon de Belmont, wrote that "it looked much more like a cathedral than that of Quebec"¹². It was one of the most significant monuments of French colonial architecture in Montreal, a perfect example of the dichotomy of traditions described in chapter III. The construction of the present Notre-Dame Church on Place d'Armes, from 1824 to 1829, constitutes a breach with the cultural and artisan traditions of French Canadians. A study of the previous church

will reveal the extent of this breach of traditions.

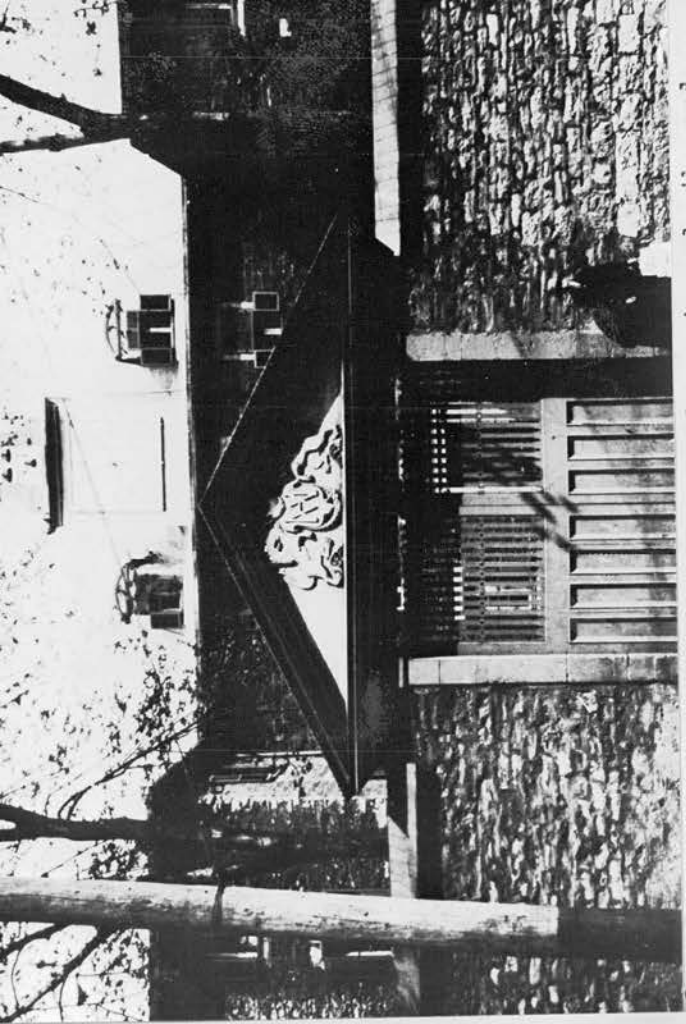
The first Notre-Dame Church was the embodiment of the perennity of medieval traditions; this appears from its strong structure as well as from the materials used in the construction. The church's ability to adapt and to evolve through successive alterations reinforces this feeling. Indeed, the nave had to be enlarged to accomodate the rapid population increases in Montreal. In 1731, three chapels were inserted between the transept and the right towers, three years later, the left side underwent the same alterations. Such free, organic growth dictated by the needs of the times are indicative of Middle Age concepts rather than of the formal concepts of classic tradition. The architecture of the first Notre-Dame Church was dynamic and, to a contemporary observer, it seemed to grow with the city. In spite of architectural features borrowed from classicism, like arched windows and dormers, and raised corner stones, the building was true to the medieval spirit. It was in that spirit that the sanctuary was enlarged without detracting from the style or infringing on any canon. Yet, the front of the church seems to have inherited from a completely different tradition. (Pl. 18 & 19)

In fact, important alterations were made to the church after 1722. And not the least important of these was the remodelling of the front according to designs of the King's



18. Façade of the parish church of Notre-Dame. Water-colour by John Drake, 1828, after a project by Chaussegros de Léry, 1721.

19. Parish church of Notre-Dame, Place d'Armes, after a drawing by R. A. Sproule, 1830.



20. The old St-Sulpice seminary towards the end of the 19th century.

21. The "maison de ferme St-Gabriel", built in 1698, with extensions in 1726 and in 1728.



Engineer, Chaussegros de Léry. The front, in common Jesuit style, was compressed between two massive towers and had two levels separated by an entablature. The lower storey was decorated with pilasters in the Tuscan style framing a central arched door and two windows placed symmetrically on either side of this axis. The upper storey, smaller in size than the lower one, was connected with it in traditional Jesuit style, by two wings. This storey was also decorated with pilasters framing a large central window and supporting an entablature adorned with triglyphs and crowned with a classical triangular fronton. Two identical steeples had been provided for in the original plan, but only one was finally completed (on Place d'Armes side) and late at that, in 1782.

If the sketch by John Drake (1828), depicting the façade is a faithful representation of Gaspard Chaussegros de Léry's intentions, it confirms a previous contention that the latter was above all interested in military architecture. The façade he designed for Notre-Dame in Montreal is in fact severe, without great refinement of details, displaying rather clumsy military rigour. Leaving aside esthetic considerations, M. de Léry's façade, attached to a less exclusively classical structure is nevertheless very symbolic of the influence of the ruling class. In those days, the ruling class was familiar with the current fashions in architecture, and Chaussegros de

Léry, as a King's Engineer, was both the envoy and the promoter of that fashion. The two founding classes of New France's society did not mix. In a ^{KE}light manner, the façade designed by the King's Engineer did not fit in with the church's nave: it was irrelevant in many ways, but especially because of its formalism and its identifiable style. Juxtapositions of this kind are frequent in Europe: a façade with three classical orders has been added to the western side of the sixteenth century gothic nave of St-Gervais-St-Protais in Paris (1616-1621). They reflect the passing of time with its corresponding changes in fashions and architectural ideals. In Notre-Dame of Montreal, though, both constructions are almost contemporary and are the simultaneous expression of two architectural traditions. In fact, when M. de Léry designed the front, it appeared more like a curb on popular tradition than like the logical and chronological attainment of its evolution. One should hardly be surprised to find out that when the old church was demolished in 1830 to clear the parvis for the new Notre-Dame, the "Jesuit" style front was carefully dismantled and rebuilt to ornament the old church of the Monastery of the Récollets in Montreal (1706)¹³. Once more, the ruling class was imposing its own brand of classicism on a construction built in the popular tradition.

In a certain way, the plan drawn by de Léry was

an innovation. It provided for two bell-towers though only the foundations for the second were laid down. Before M. de Léry's project, twin bell-towers were unknown to religious architecture in New France, and even in France they were a rare occurrence in the seventeenth century. Moreover, in a colony with very limited resources, such luxury did not fulfill any functional need, not even that of accentuating the predominance of the church in the social organization. It could very well be that the Sulpicians were attempting to surpass the splendour of Quebec's Cathedral, for the rivalry between Quebec and Montreal was an old one. It could also have been a legacy from the great ^{esque} romance abbeys in Normandy or from the great gothic cathedrals from "Ile de France". It might also have been inspired by the legitimate desire of the Messieurs de St-Sulpice to recreate in Montreal a new architectural feature which highlighted the mother church in Paris. Even though the famous Paris façade by Servandoni was completed some years after that of Notre-Dame of Montreal, i.e. in 1749, with one tower completed in 1788, St-Sulpice Church in Paris was nearing completion as early as 1660 and Dollier de Casson, Vachon de Belmont and other Sulpicians of Montreal must have been aware of its plans. Whatever the case, the two-tower plan as a means of eroding the importance of the church was to have a significant influence on the architecture of parish churches

in New France and in Quebec and would set a trend that would last until the twentieth century. Thus, from the beginning of the seventeenth century onwards, Montreal set the tone in Canadian architecture, a position which the city has held until now.¹⁴

The old Notre-Dame Church is not the only public building in old regime Montreal to have displayed features borrowed from the two architectural traditions. The Old Seminary of St-Sulpice on Notre-Dame Street is another case in point. The Seminary has survived to this day and is in a reasonable state of repair, in spite of a disappearance of one of the two original wings, a fact which lessens its character.¹⁵ Several features of Medieval tradition are apparent in the Seminary: the staircases in the corner towers, the turrets which had been erected at both ends of the back of the building and which are no longer extant, the solid foundations with cradle-vaults, the predominance of full spaces over empty spaces and the artisan building techniques. On the other hand, even though the Seminary was not built all at once, several features dear to classicism are also obvious: a U shaped plan, with turrets, lateral wings and doors symmetrically located about a central axis, a balanced vertical and horizontal alignment of windows, arched crowning of some of the dormers and the freestone framework of the openings. The Seminary is

usually attributed to Vachon de Belmont, who was Dollier de Casson's successor at the head of the Seminary and who largely financed its construction from his own fortune. At any rate, whoever the architect was, he showed himself capable of blending contemporary ideas with a more traditional architecture. The whole structure seems somewhat squat, the storeys are low and the windows small, but this is an adaptation to the climate. On the other hand, its strength, its naïve confidence and the fineness of its clock and bell-turret lend the structure a great deal of character. (Fig. 9 and Pl. 20)

In order to further satisfy their need to identify with the classical tradition, the seigneurs of the Island of Montreal donned the Seminary with a most charming main door leading to the old main building. The casing of the door is made up of ionic pilasters topped by a very simple entablature with the date "1740" engraved on the frieze. Whoever designed the small classical portal knew the classical orders. Some maintain it was Chaussegros de Léry. Others, and among them Moreau, are of the opinion that Monsieur Normant, then superior of Montreal's Seminary, had it designed by the Chevalier de Beaucourt, Captain and King's Engineer¹⁶.

The Seminary's small formal garden "à la française" is the oldest in the metropolis and is the only significant green space to have survived in Old Montreal, which today is

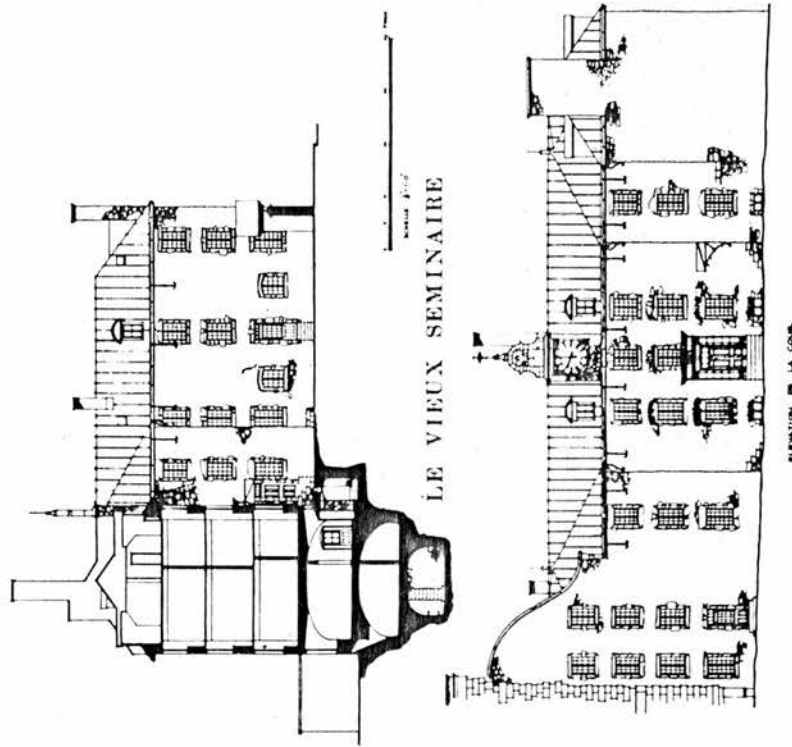
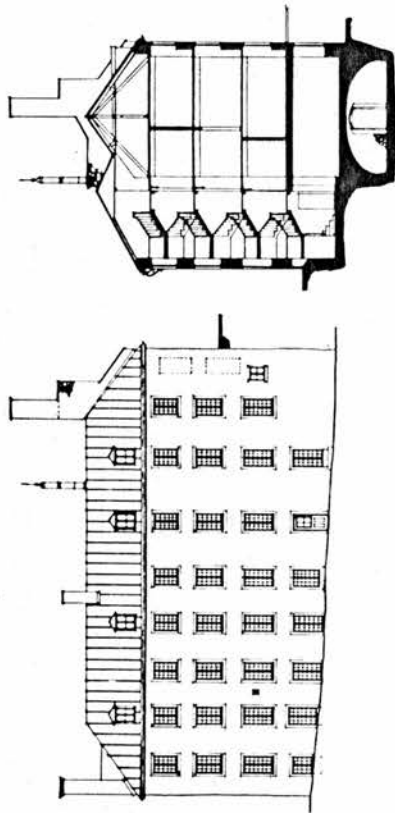


FIG. 9 The old St-Sulpice seminary; central part built in 1683-84.

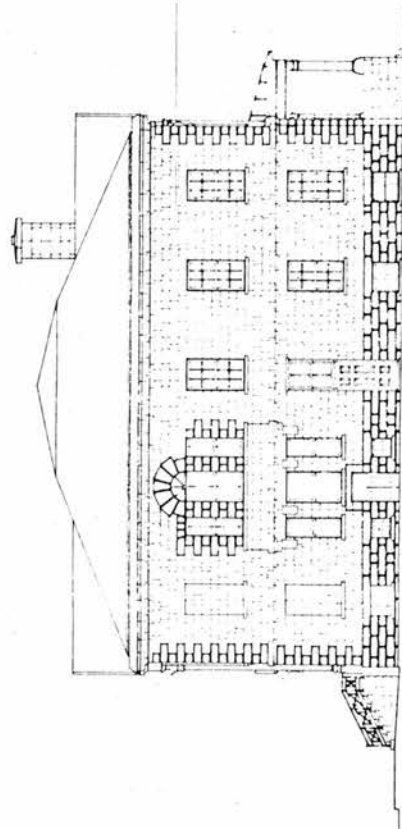
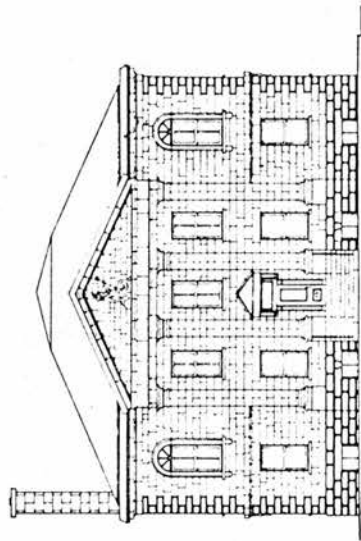


FIG. 10 The Old Customs House; view from St-Faul Street and view from the western side of Place Royale. John Ostell, arch., 1835.

but stone, asphalt and concrete. The historical maps are not clear on this matter, but it seems that it was originally intended to be a vegetable garden. In this, it follows the tradition of the medieval cloister gardens, which were used as vegetable gardens, as spaces to walk through or to rest in, even as cemeteries, but rarely to ornament the monastery itself or any other building. Such spaces were usually enclosed, and this was the case at the old Notre-Dame Seminary in Montreal. Even today, one may not be aware of its existence as one walks through the neighbouring streets. It may be reached through a long dark corridor running along the western wing. Upon entering the garden, one is struck by a feeling of intimacy reminiscent of European medieval towns.

The architecture of the old St-Sulpice Seminary was a blend of two traditions, but such was not the case for the Château de Vaudreuil. It was located at the foot of today's Place Jacques-Cartier and together with the Jesuit building facing it on Notre-Dame Street, it was destroyed by fire on June 6, 1803. Luckily, a sketch by James Duncan and other authentic sketches enable us to describe its appearance. It was designed to be the residence in Montreal of the colony's governor, and the Marquis de Montcalm as well as the Duke of Lévis spent some time there. Such functions required a certain decorum: the Château was meant to highlight the prestige

of the ruling class.

It was therefore the most classical of public buildings in Montreal under the old regime and perhaps also the most elegant. Gaspard Chaussegros de Léry drew the plans in 1723 and they turned out better than the ones he drew for the façade of Notre-Dame Church. Volumes and openings were distributed symmetrically about a central entrance, in a manner reminiscent of the small classical portal of the Old Seminary. A formal staircase "à la Fontainebleau" led to the entrance. The storeys were separated horizontally by moldings and by a cornice on the roof, and the reception rooms were designed so as to show a generous view of the outer esplanade. The Château was Montreal's modest contribution to the classical and baroque canons which governed public architecture in contemporary France. Unlike the cloistered garden of the Old Seminary, the formal garden of the Château was purely ornamental, meant to highlight the prestige of its functions. While it may not have compared favourably with the most insignificant of private mansions of eighteenth century Paris, the Château de Vaudreuil seems to have been equalled only by the Bishop's palace in Quebec.¹⁷

3. Domestic Architecture

Domestic architecture was the most likely to undergo the influences of the environment and of the climate. As we have indicated earlier, the popular class was made up of

simple people who came from the rural regions of France. They had little self-awareness, but brought with them the legacy of an ancestral way of building. Its main purpose was to satisfy the basic needs for security and comfort in the face of outside elements. Heaven knows that in Canada the need for security and comfort in the face of hostile natives and harsh winters was more bitterly felt than in "douce France". Moreover, domestic architecture was very receptive to the various influences of the new continent, as it applied to the most common type of construction and also the least likely to submit to the culture-centered currents of architectural fashions. By comparison, public buildings, whether secular or ecclesiastical, were much fewer in number and were meant to reflect the ideals of the ruling class. Therefore, they were much less likely to lend themselves to experimentation and adaptation. This is what appears from the slow evolution of the Quebec house from its original European models.

What were the models like? It has repeatedly stated that the models for domestic architecture in the Montreal region came from the northern provinces of France, more specifically from Maine, Anjou and especially Brittany. Here is what Séguin has to say:

... la maison montréalaise prend l'aspect d'une petite forteresse domestique

carrée, massive, flanquée de lourdes cheminées, elle est construite de gros cailloux des champs, noyés dans le mortier. Les carreaux qui crèvent les murs se dérobent sous d'épais contrevents bardés de fer... Cette dernière demeure est plutôt d'inspiration bretonne.¹⁸

The author, who has visited the French provinces, acknowledges the accuracy of that statement. In Lower Brittany, in the departments of Loire Atlantique and Morbihan, the peasant house is robust, squat, gloomy and anonymous, and solidly anchored in the ground like a solitary menhir. The stone walls have small openings and small dormers are perched on a simple double-slope roof. Two chimneys at each end of the building tower over gables which are often windowless. All in all these houses look like the houses which were found in the Montreal region at the beginning of the colony and of which the old specimen is still extant.

The best example is perhaps the house of the St-Gabriel Farm in Pointe St-Charles. It was built in 1698 and enlarged in 1726 and 1728. The elongated plan of the house already shows the large common room; the first floor is almost level with the ground; the massive walls are two feet thick. The roof, with a slope of 50%, have small dormers and its eaves do not protrude more than six inches beyond the outside walls. This house looks like a prototype for the Quebec rural house.¹⁹ (Pl. 21

Weather conditions and new patterns of activities dictated by the contingencies of the environment as well as the inhabitants' contacts with other American colonies enables this type of house to reach a state of perfect adaptation during the nineteenth century (1780-1920). The rural house was more affected by this evolution than the town dwellings. The stone foundations progressively rose above the ground level to fend off snow accumulation in winter; a gallery became the functional link between the ground floor and the ground level; the roof's slope was progressively reduced to a practical 45%, while the edges of the roof were extended in order to better protect the walls and later on, to cover the galleries; a stove replaced the open fireplace, thus reducing the size of the chimneys to the point where the second chimney was reduced to an ornament. Improvements of the heating system and the use of double windows allowed for more and larger windows. The interior remained simple: a large common room serving both as a kitchen and as a living-room, a parlour, and one or two other rooms; the storey below the attic was divided into rooms or kept for storage, or both. A summer kitchen was often added to the most exposed wall; it was cool during the summer and used for cold storage during the winter.²⁰ Several good specimens of the Quebec rural house may still be found on the Island of Montreal, in places not yet affected by the urban sprawl, like

Ste-Geneviève, Cap St-Jacques or Senneville. Whether made of wood or of stone, they have all adapted to the environment in a similar manner.

The urban house developed in a different manner, as may be seen from old houses in Old Montreal, like la Maison du Calvet probably built around 1770, la Maison du Patriote built around the same time, la Maison de la Sauvegarde, built around the end of the eighteenth century, and la Maison Del Vecchio (1807-1809). Indeed, these structures show few if any traces of a significant elevation above the ground, or of a gallery and protruding roof edges; on the other hand, fine breaking-walls and floors became characteristic features. Even though none of these houses dates back to the French regime, they nevertheless are characteristic of the urban dwelling inherited from the old regime. One may set aside the city residence of the Marquis de Lotbinière located at 221, rue du St-Sacrement and probably erected around 1765, and the Maison Papineau, part of which had been built around the same date, because restorations have altered their domestic architectural features.

Here again, Brittany had provided the models for urban dwellings in eighteenth century Montreal which displays some features found in the austere alignments of city dwellings in Guingamp, Châtelaudren, St-Brieuc or Lamballe, on the north

coast of Brittany. A pent roof with the ridge parallel to the street is one of the most important common features found in the towns of Brittany and in Montreal. This seems to be the reason why the arrangement was used here even though the climate did not favour it. Indeed, in Canada's harsh climate, it would have been more logical to place the ridge of the roof perpendicular to the street as in Flemish, Rhenish or Dutch houses in order to protect the street and passers-by from falling water, snow or ice.²¹ This aspect of the matter did not worry the sparse population of eighteenth century Montreal; moreover, it may have been overlooked because it was foreign to the building traditions of the inhabitants of Montreal.

Other differences between the traditional rural houses may be better accounted for by the interventions of the ruling class than by cultural legacy or the natural influences of the environment. The citizens often accepted the interventions with reticence, a fact which indicates that they ran contrary to acquired tendencies and attitudes. The "Ordonnance portant règlement pour la reconstruction des maisons (destroyed by the fire of 19th June 1921, in the Town of Montreal) en matériaux incombustibles et pour d'autres fins; du huitième juillet, mil sept sent vingt-un", was the first important intervention. It was Intendant Michel Bégon's immediate intention to prevent, through both inducement and coercive regulations,

the repetition of a blaze like that of 19th June which had razed more than 130 buildings in the town.²² This ordinance was confirmed and completed by a second ordinance "portant Règlement pour la construction des Maisons, en matériaux incombustibles, dans les Villes de la Colonie; du 7 juin 1727" by Intendant Claude Thomas Dupuy. This ordinance constitutes a true abridged construction and town planning code and deserves a closer look.

First of all, the intendant forbids anyone "de bâtir aucune maison dans les villes et gros bourgs, où il se trouvera de la pierre commodément, autrement qu'en pierres; défendons de les bâtir en bois, de pièces sur pièces et de colombage,..." and he further ordered that all houses should be built with two storeys. Judging from remarks by Pierre Kalm, who wrote in 1749 that "a few houses in the city are built of stone; most are built of timber, but very elegantly built"²³, it does not seem that the obligation to build in stone was ever followed to the letter. This would also account for the small number of houses still extant today.

The ordinance further recommends that "caves et celliers (soient) voûtés le plus qu'il sera possible, pour éviter la pourriture des poutres et planchers qu'on met dessus...". Such vaults are found here and there in Old Montreal, at the Château de Ramezay and in a building located at the

south-west corner of St-Laurent and St-Paul Streets; the arched vaults of its foundation today serve as a background for a discotheque. In the case of cellars located above the street, the intendant orders to move "les escaliers du dehors dans le dedans des maisons, de façon qu'il n'y ait jamais dehors dans la rue que trois marches au plus en hauteur et en saillie". Some people found even these few steps to be a problem. This is what E.A. Talbot has to say:

Les rues sont en général très-étroites, et pour ajouter aux inconvénients qui en résultent, on a rendu les trottoirs presque impraticables, par l'usage absurde qui prévaut dans toute la ville, d'élever en dehors des portes, des marches en bois qui avancent de deux ou trois pieds dans les rues. Si seulement deux personnes se rencontrent près de ces constructions embarrassantes, elles sont inévitablement obligées ou de retourner sur leur pas, ou, par un excès de complaisance, de descendre dans le milieu de la rue, probablement pour s'y trouver dans la neige jusqu'aux genoux, ou dans la boue jusqu'à la cheville des pieds²⁴.

It is easily understood that the galleries of rural dwellings were not found in the cities where space was at a premium.

Then follows a series of regulations designed to lessen the risks of fire. It is forbidden "de mêler dans la construction des murs de face et de pignons extérieurs des maisons aucuns bois apparens..."; it is strictly forbidden "de

couvrir en bardeau aucune des maisons qui se construisent actuellement dans les villes et dans les faubourgs des villes"; it is forbidden to build "des toits brisés, dit à la mansarde... qui font sur les bâtiments une forêt de bois..."; it is forbidden "de poser et d'adosser aucune cheminée ou tuyau de poêles sur des cloisons, pans de bois et colombages...", etc. These interdictions are followed by suggestions like the following,

de faire sur les planchers des greniers et galetas un hourdi ou aire de chaux et sable, épais au moins de deux pouces, afin que le plancher supérieur des maisons étant ainsi à l'abri du feu, permette plus aisément d'abattre et jeter bas le toit des mêmes maisons, si le cas arrivoit de feu dans la maison, ou d'un incendie dans le voisinage des dites maisons.

Such fire-breaker floors are found in the Vieux Séminaire St-Sulpice and in the Château de Ramezay. One suggestion in particular would leave a visual mark on Quebec houses: the construction of "murs de refend qui en excèdent les toits et les coupent en différentes parties, ou qui les séparent d'avec les maisons voisines, à l'effet que le feu se communique moins de l'une à l'autre...".

The common wall with a fire-breaker gable extending above the roof line and leaning on corbels would become one of the most distinctive features of urban Montreal in the

eighteenth century and in the beginning of the nineteenth century. And it is obvious that the style created by this functional feature, which was originally designed to prevent fire from spreading from one roof to another, survived this function. Thus, the western wall of the Maison du Calvet is not a common wall but overlooks Bonsecours Street and is topped by an imposing fire-breaker gable made of stone and surmounted by two chimneys linked by a straight parapet. The same is true of the Château de Ramezay which has always been completely isolated from the urban surroundings. Moreover, rural houses in the Montreal region were often built with fire-breaker gables, a feature borrowed from the urban house, even though the need to prevent the spreading of fire never existed in this case. As is often the case in architecture, the form long outlived the function for which it was imposed.²⁵

The ordinance by Intendant Dupuis is as much a code for town planning as it is a code for construction. As specified by the intendant himself: "il ne faut pas moins songer à la bonne disposition et à la décoration de la ville, qu'à la durée de ses édifices...". Consequently he ordered that "il ne sera assis aucun nouveau bâtiment... qu'après avoir pris, par le propriétaire de la maison à bâtir ou à rétablir, son alignement sur le terrain même, et par écrit du Sieur de Bécancourt, grand voyer du Canada..." and this "sous peine

d'amende contre les maîtres maçons et entrepreneurs, et d'encourir, par les propriétaires la démolition de leurs maisons à leurs frais et dépens...". The intendant further orders that:

on ne mette aucune porte à faux sur les rues, qu'on n'anticipe point sur les places publiques, tant par le corps du bâtiment que par les escaliers qui seront réglés en même temps que l'alignement, et qu'on ne construise point de maison, trop près des portes de la ville, des remparts, des batteries, dans les places publiques et autres lieux destinés à la défense et à la décoration des villes, et pour qu'il soit donné aux places et aux rues des largeurs et pentes convenables pour l'écoulement des eaux, la commodité, la sûreté et la salubrité publique.

This ordinance of June 7, 1727 ends on this note of fairness:

Nous ordonnons, pour faire sur cela une juste compensation et procurer aux seigneurs un dédommagement convenable, qu'à l'égard de ceux qui, pour se conformer aux alignements donnés, perdront de leur terrain, ils seront déchargés du payement des cens et rentes dues aux seigneurs, au prorata de ce qu'il leur sera ôté du terrain, comme aussi que ceux dont les emplacements seront augmentés par les alignemens qui leur auront été donnés, payeront les cens et rentes seigneuriales à proportion du terrain qu'ils acquerront d'augmentation...²⁶.

The reading of this type of ordinance reveals that the foundation and principles for State intervention, whether

it be by an absolute or democratic State, in the organization and development of the environment and the control of its constituent parts have all in all not changed much in the last two and a half centuries. Present day regulations governing construction and development, while respecting the rights of all parties, aim to uphold certain standards judged necessary for the public good. Likewise, ordinances like those of July 8, 1721 and June 7, 1727 had the same objectives in mind. Inasmuch as they were likely to change or modify certain acquired attitudes or tendencies in the face of development and to create differences between the urban and rural house, the latter was much less affected by the rulers' concern.

We shall now attempt to complete the picture of the urban house in eighteenth century Montreal with a study of a few dwellings which have survived from the end of that century. The plan was rectangular, but some of the older houses like the Maison de la Sauvegarde were sometimes as long as they were wide. The plan was always a simple one, normally divided vertically between day activities and nocturnal rest, and horizontally between front rooms and back rooms. This division was often reflected in the two chimneys linked by a parapet as in the Maison du Calvet and the Château de Ramezay. The walls were thick, in most cases made of rough stones or roughly cut stones; ashlar would be used at the beginning of the nineteenth

century. On the front, full surfaces covered a wider area than the openings, and windows varied in dimensions; some were even rather large as in the case of the del Vecchio house. Dormers were small. Pent roofs were most common, separated by fire-breaker gables, and surmounted by "cheminées formant éperons à chaque bout de l'édifice et contenant autant de gaines que de pièces à chauffer"²⁷. According to Morisset²⁸, the slope of the roof seems to have decreased with time. Thus, for instance, the slope is 45% for la Maison du Calvet and la Maison de la Sauvegarde, 40% for a house located at civic number 160-170 on St-Amable Street, and 35% for the Youville Stables. The interiors must have been covered with pine boards like the ones recently restored in the Maison du Calvet and the Maison del Vecchio.

A concern for aesthetics inspired by classicism and probably to a certain extent by the presence of public buildings like the Old Seminary and the Château de Vaudreuil seems to have influenced the construction of these urban dwellings. Full surfaces and openings were equally distributed about an axis on the front of the house; openings were placed at regular intervals and the windows of the first or second floor were usually on the same axis as the corresponding doors and windows of the ground floor. Even dormers were placed either on the same axis as the full surfaces or on the axis of

openings. Some buildings are graced with an overall symmetry, as appears from the plans of the Maison du Patriote with doors at each end of the building.

In some domestic construction, the pursuit of forms has been carried even further and some shy attempts at applying a principle of Italian Renaissance architecture are evident. It was the custom to highlight one floor, usually the ground floor, by designing it more carefully. The ceilings were placed higher and the front of the house was given prominence by making windows of various dimensions. This is the case of la Maison du Calvet, la Maison du Patriote, la Maison Truteau on St-Gabriel Street and a few other houses. Another expression of classicism could be found in the ornamentation of doors and windows with lintels placed at the same level and frameworks of relatively well dressed stones.

Who were the architects of these residences? Usually, where public architecture is concerned, whether secular or ecclesiastic, the answer is easy to find, for contracts were usually recorded. Such is not the case for domestic architecture. Today's architect is very different from his counterpart in the seventeenth or eighteenth century. In those days of traditional, popular architecture, the artist and the craftsman was but one man: he designed the building and usually also built it. He was also a master-mason or a contractor and it

was difficult to find out where one field of activity ended and the other began. Indeed "qui disait maître maçon indiquait un homme également versé dans la théorie et dans la pratique de l'art de bâtir; la pensée, à cette époque, ne se séparait pas de la main"²⁹. Thus, the first contract for masonry work (on April 27, 1705) for the Château de Ramezay was granted to Pierre Couturier "maître maçon et architecte".³⁰ A Sieur Paul Texier La Vigne "Me Maçon & Entrepreneur" will be asked to restore and enlarge the Château in 1755.³¹ During the old regime, several "architectes, entrepreneurs, maçons" operated in Montreal, and one would be at a loss to find out whether they had any formation in their trade or whether they were improvising. In his "Mémento historique de Montréal", Massicotte mentions about twenty of them and includes among them people with such diverse vocations as Dollier de Casson, Vachon de Belmont and Gaspard Chaussegros de Léry.³² It is quite possible that a man like Pierre Janson-Lapalme, stone-cutter and master-mason, who worked on Notre-Dame Church and built the portals for the Chapel of the Récollets (1712) and for the Jesuits' Chapel (1719) did in fact spend some of his talent on domestic architecture.³³ The same is probably true of his son, Dominique, architect and contractor who was contractor for the fortifications of Montreal.³⁴ J. P. Testard de Montigny, who appeared on the Montreal scene in 1754 carried the title of

"auteur de plans de maisons".³⁵ Names and titles meant little, for the popular traditions in the construction trade were transmitted from father to son, from master to apprentice. Even if a century separated la Maison du Calvet from la Maison Truteau, the concepts and methods of construction and the materials used were almost the same in both cases.

This analysis would not be complete without a glance at the Château de Ramezay, which is Montreal's best known and most appreciated specimen of French colonial architecture. Yet, it has not always been so: it has been threatened with demolition and a good deal of its character has been destroyed with the building of a parking lot around it. It has been saved nevertheless and it stands opposite City Hall, as a symbol of the authority of the old regime and as the only large residence of the French era which survived to this day.

The Château de Ramezay's history is rather complex. It was the residence of the Governor of Montreal, M. de Ramezay, and of his family. It was then sold in 1745 to the Compagnie des Indes which used it to store cloth, spices, liquors and pelts. At the time of the conquest, it regained its position as Government House and the British governors stayed there, except for a short interval when the Americans drove them out when they established their headquarters for the occupation troops in the Château (1775-1776). Around 1784, Baron de

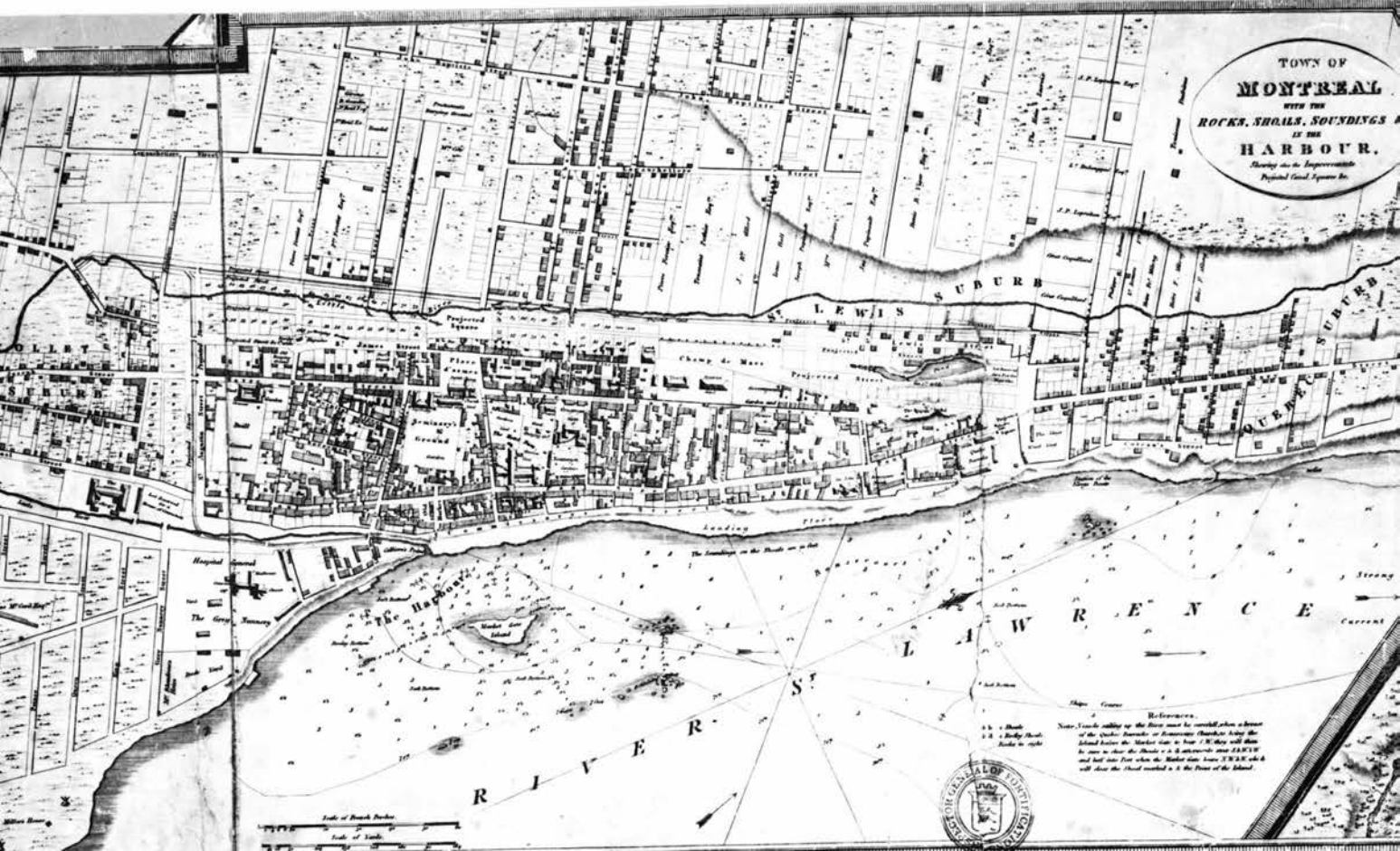
Saint-Léger restored the Château and lived in it for a while. It was once more linked to the country's history when the Special Council held its sessions in it between 1838 and 1841. It then became the gathering place for deliberations during the stormy sessions between 1844 and 1849. In the fall of that year, it became a Court of Justice. From 1856 to 1867 it was used by the Ministry of Education and it housed the Normal School from 1856 to 1878. Next it housed the University of Laval and from 1889 to 1893 it was once more used as a Court of Justice. The City of Montreal bought the Château a few years later to hand it over to the Société d'archéologie et de numismatique de Montréal which changed it into a museum.³⁶ (Pl. 22)

That the Château's original character should have been altered by a succession of so many various landlords who used it for a variety of purposes is hardly surprising. As mentioned earlier, it was enlarged and restored in 1755 by the Compagnies des Indes. Doors and windows were made in the walls and at other times walled in, fireplaces and chimneys were added, others dismantled. Around 1830 ugly additions were built on to it on the east side, including turrets (1906-?) to enhance its appearance as a "Château". At the present time (early 1972) an attempt is being made at restoring it to its 1755 appearance.

As a specimen of architecture, the Château de



22. The Château de Ramezay around 1920. Paul Texier La Vigne, master mason and contractor, 1755.
23. Plan of the town of Montreal in 1815, by Joseph Bouchette, showing the projected town improvements.



Ramezay is interesting, for it represents an intermediary stage between the typical urban house and the rural house then found in the Montreal neighbourhood. Its rectangular plan (50' by 100') is basically that of an urban row house, with the characteristic heavy wall dividing the whole length of the building into front rooms and rear rooms. In line with this characteristic division, there are two chimneys on the west side joined by a straight parapet. The two end walls with gables projecting beyond the roof line take their inspiration from the fire-breaker common walls separating urban row houses. As a single detached house, the Château de Ramezay appears as a synthesis of some of the forms which were borrowed from the urban row house and which outlived their original purpose to become fashions. The fact that the building was impressive for its quality and that it looked somewhat like a private mansion in Paris, as well as the prestige of its functions may have significantly contributed to the success of this type of house. Indeed, the nineteenth century saw the proliferation of this type of detached rural house in the Montreal region.

The building rests on the powerful cradle-vaults of its foundations. The floors of the attics are covered with slabs of stone 4" thick resting on solid cedar beams, closely joined side by side. As explained earlier, such floors were meant to prevent fire from spreading to or from the attics.

Tenons, mortizes and wooden pegs hold the truss-frame of the roof together. From these few details it is obvious that the Château is solid in construction and that it represents the state of the art in the various fields of seventeenth century craftsmanship.

4. The Environment of the Frontier Town

It is difficult to imagine what the character and the quality of the urban environment were like in Montreal in the middle of the eighteenth century. The actual environment has been so altered that there is little left on which to base an opinion. The grid of streets may have changed little, but drastic changes in the various functions of the urban environment, in building techniques and modes of transportation have altered the essence of its original design. It no longer appears to belong to its urban environment, and impersonal buildings 10 or 20 storeys high have to be cramped on a grid designed for family dwellings one or two storeys high. Only two blocks, which suffered fewer alterations because they were developed later and built of more enduring materials than wood, may give us a vague idea of what the original environment was like. They are the Bonsecours block, between St-Paul Street, Berri Street, Notre-Dame Street and Place Jacques-Cartier, and the Youville block, a triangle formed by Place d'Youville, Commune Street and Normand Street. But even there, the blocks

are forever separated from a cluster of which the foremost quality was its homogeneity. In order to recreate the picture, we are forced to refer to historical maps, to ordinances and other authentic documents, and to brief descriptions of the town by contemporary observers.

Judging from the tone as well as from the number of ordinances on the matter, Montreal during the French colonial regime seems to have suffered from deplorable hygienic conditions. Thus, for instance, the ordinance promulgated in Montreal on June 22, 1706 by Intendant Jacques Raudot forbids "à tous les habitants de quelque qualité et condition qu'ils soient de jeter aucunes immondices, terres et fumier dans les dites rues ..." and "... de garder dans leurs maisons aucuns cochons... et de laisser vaquer dans les rues aucunes bêtes à corne..."³⁷. This state of affairs does not seem to have improved with time. Thus, on April 24, 1745, M. Guition de Monrepos promulgated an ordinance compelling "tous les habitants de Montréal, propriétaires ou locataires, à ramasser au-devant de leurs terrains les fumiers, immondices et ordures qui y seront, chaque jour, de les mettre en tas, à côté de la voie publique, pour ne pas nuire aux voitures..."³⁸. This kind of ordinance is systematically repeated every spring, which suggests that the harshness of Canadian winters did not allow the citizens to properly clear their garbage which would pile up

in the yards and on the streets until spring. In New France, such poor hygienic conditions are not unique to Montreal: the other towns and villages in the colony seem to have suffered the same conditions. To wit: Quebec's Superior Council ruled on February 1st, 1706 that in the capital, landlords, tenants and house builders should "faire des latrines et privés, afin d'éviter l'infection et la puanteur que ces ordures apportent lorsqu'elles se font dans les rues..."³⁹.

Such poor sanitary conditions are hardly surprising. Public hygiene is a relatively recent practice. The Quebec or Montreal resident who relieved himself on the street was hardly less civilized than the nobles at the Court of France who, at the same time, did the same thing in the staircases and the corridors of Versailles. Sanitary conditions in the small town of Montreal were not worse - maybe even better - than those prevailing in most European cities in the eighteenth century. In those days, according to J. H. Plumb, in many towns and villages in England, most cellars did not only shelter people, but also their pigs, poultry and sometimes their horses and cattle. Even worse, all residents, merchants and craftsmen used the streets as a dump; even butchers would throw scraps to rot there.⁴⁰ Such conditions may very well have been worse in England because of the impact of growing industrialization, but they remained a significant feature of life in France. With

the installation of aqueducts and public sewers, we have undoubtedly made great progress in that field. Yet, we have not progressed that far. We seem to have managed to get rid of our garbage with elegance and refinement, but we have also polluted our atmosphere and natural waterways within a radius of 100 miles around Montreal. In 1760, a 15 minute walk away from his house or place of work would take the Montrealer into nature's wilderness and he was able to draw much of his food from fishing in the river. Who could have believed that two centuries of progress were to transform the wide, clear river into a revolting sewer and push back nature to a distance over an hour by car from the city?

Similar deficiencies appear in the development and maintenance of public roadways in eighteenth century Montreal, as indicated in this statement from Intendant Raudot:

Ayant connu en arrivant en cette ville le désordre qui étoit dans toutes les rues, lesquelles sont quasi impraticables dans toutes les saisons, non seulement aux gens de pied, mais même aux carosses et charrois, et ce à cause des bourbiers qui se trouvent dans les dites rues qui proviennent tant de la mauvaise nature et inégalité du terrain que des immondices que les habitans y jettent journellement...⁴¹.

These conditions do not seem to have improved with time, for as late as 1785, Joseph Hadfield noted in his "Diary" that

streets are unpaved, which makes the town unpleasant during poor weather conditions and that walking in the streets, under any weather, is always hard on the feet.⁴² During the French regime, the authorities did try to alleviate these conditions by compelling the inhabitants to build and maintain sidewalks during the winter months. Thus, for instance, an ordinance dated November 10, 1744 compels

chaque propriétaire de Montréal à
tirer ou à faire tirer durant l'hiver
toutes les pièces de bois nécessaires
pour faire des banquettes devant leurs
maisons, et ce afin que dans les temps
de glace, les gens de pied puissent y
marcher en sûreté⁴³.

Such conditions are hardly shocking either: they were normal for the time. Plumb, whom we quoted earlier, reminds us that in those days, streets were unpaved in the towns of England. Many of them were particularly narrow and congested to a point that in Bristol, for instance, carriages could not pass through them and goods were transported on sleds.⁴⁴ One should keep in mind that aqueducts, sewers and night lighting are but recent improvements to the comforts of life in the city. Even in large capitals like London, such improvements were carried out in main arteries only, from the second half of the eighteenth century onwards.⁴⁵

In spite of such negative features, it seems that the small town did in fact function quite adequately. It is

in the nature of organic growth to integrate urban development at the rythm of needs and opportunities. During the pre-industrial era, the pace of growth and urbanization was very slow: integration took place smoothly and thus a balance was achieved between the needs and interests of the community and those of the private citizens. Documents issuing from the authorities of that time give no indication of any major flaw in the basic plan for development drawn by Dollier de Casson. The various ordinances relating to urban life in Montreal tended to improve rather than to alter the practical application of that plan. Various legislations attest to this fact: rulings on the width of streets, on the alignment of houses, on the construction and maintenance of sidewalks, on garbage and snow removal, etc.

Montreal in the eighteenth century was a fortified town with some distinguishing features of spatial relationships between the various organs of urban life. Trading took place in the lower town, because of its proximity to the river. There was the market place and, all along St-Paul Street, the merchants' district. In those days, the place of work and the living quarters were located in the same house, and merchants lived and worked in the same district. The administrative buildings were located in the east end and included the Château de Vaudreuil, the Château de Ramezay, the Palais de

l'Intendance, the Hangars et Quais du Roy and the Citadel.

As we have seen earlier, religious institutions took care of the physical, social, cultural and spiritual needs of the small community. These institutions were located around the parish church on the high crest of the Côteau St-Louis along Notre-Dame Street. The buildings of the religious institutions and of the civil administration were located in their own district, respectively, but they stood out against the more humble private dwellings around them by their very size and also because of the open green spaces surrounding them. The green spaces were like buffer zones separating the geometric volumes of these buildings and the rest of the built-up environment. In 1749 Pierre Kalm remarked...:

There are several churches in the town:
I shall only mention the churches of
the various religious orders, the
Sulpicians, the Jesuits, and the Fran-
ciscains; the church of the convent
and the church of the hospital... each
one of these buildings has beautiful
gardens..."⁴⁶.

This was an environment made of geometric volumes and empty spaces, of masses and hollow spaces. Montreal in the middle of the eighteenth century was a homogeneous environment, which had developed along a constant and uniform scale. The streets were "straight, wide, with smaller streets crossing at right angles "⁴⁷. A contemporary observer would have

beheld austere rows of solid, anonymous houses, all built to about the same height. Here and there, around a corner, gardens and public places, dotted with distinctive, larger structures which attested to the town's main aspirations as well as to the ideals of the ruling class. The overall picture was articulated in a free, well proportioned, harmonious manner generating contrast and variety in the middle of a homogeneous environment bounded by its fortifications. Such an environment looks conspicuously like the environment created by the medieval towns of pre-industrial Europe!

YEARS OF TRANSITION

We should judge of the beauty of
our city, more from its impression
on strangers, than on ourselves.

Anonymous critic, American Journal
of Science and Arts, 1830.¹

1. A City of Merchants

Historians generally consider the cession of New France to Great Britain as a major event in the history of Canada. And rightly so, for the Conquest heralded the upheaval of economic, social, political, ideological and mental structures. If 1760 marked a decisive turning point, it was not an incision but a link. There was a gradual period of transition between the old and the new regime. In the field of architecture and urbanism at least, Montreal's character would not change overnight and façades on buildings would not be altered just because of the surrender. They underwent progressive transformations which, for all their significance, did not match the transformations brought about by the industrialization of Montreal in the middle of the nineteenth century. This is the reason why the years of transition are more characteristic of the frontier town than of the Victorian city.

In the first decades following the Cession, Montrealers of that period scarcely noticed any difference in

their urban surroundings. The suburbs expanded, but inside the old walls, the same austere streets and the same public buildings attesting to the same social pretensions prevailed. British governors merely replaced the French governors at Château de Ramezay and the Church of Notre-Dame continued to dominate the silhouette of the city. As late as 1795, Count de Colbert Maulevrier described this city in a manner that could be easily attributed to an observer at the end of the French regime: "Trois rues parallèles à la rivière, d'environ un mille, coupées par une dizaine d'autres, à angle droit ou à peu près forment la ville qui est entourée en partie d'un vieux mur..."².

The following year, Isaac Weld completed this description of a view of the town as seen from the heights of Mount Royal:

On the left below you appears the town of Montreal, with its churches, monasteries, glittering spires, and the shipping under its old walls....³.

There is hardly any significant difference between the westerly view of Montreal depicted by Thomas Patten in 1762 and that of Richard Dillon dated 1803. It is in all aspects the same town, undoubtedly slightly more densely built up, but with the same scale, and the same silhouette marked by the same steeples pointing skywards. It is the same town in every respect, but

from now on it is partly inhabited by anglophones. The anglo-phones however, formed only a very small part of the population, and those who think that a massive invasion of Britons followed the Cession would be surprised to learn that there were only about 100 protestants in Montreal in 1765.⁴

In fact, at the end of the eighteenth century, Montreal was a town undergoing slow transformation. In more ways than one, it had retained the mentality of the old regime. Indeed, men's reaction to the call of the vast continent were the same as under the French regime. Montreal was still looking to the west for its destiny. More than ever, its position at the crossroads of the St. Lawrence River network gave it prominence; the only difference was that its realm had changed hands. Thus, as Creighton emphasizes, the first British Canadians were adventurers attracted by the promises of the river.⁵ Alexander Henry's reaction was typical: he was a prosperous merchant in the American colonies who rushed to Montreal as soon as he learned that a new market was opened to British ventures.⁶ The most luring attraction of the river was to provide an access to the virgin territories that abounded in fur.

For another half-century, under the almost fanatical impetus of anglophone merchants, Montreal remained the American capital, if not the world capital of furs. Among the

merchants figured Englishmen like Lee, Molson and the Frobisher brothers; Americans like Price, Alexander Henry and Pond; Scotsmen like Lymburner, McBeath, McGill, Mackenzie and Simon McTavish. From around 1784, grouped into a powerful association called the North-West Company, these merchants spread across the hinterland of Montreal up to the Pacific Ocean.

In fact, just as the great discoveries under the French regime had been stimulated by the search for furs, the same motives led to the discovery of the Canadian West. It was in order to open new territories for the Montreal merchants that, in 1789, Alexander Mackenzie, partner in the North West Company, reached the great river which bears his name, and, in 1793, made his way up to the Pacific Ocean. It was for the same purpose that Simon Fraser, also a partner of the Company, followed in his footsteps and explored the territories west of the Rockies and named the River Fraser. In 1811, it was Thompson's turn to survey British Columbia on behalf of Montreal's interests, while J. J. Astor, owner of fur stores in New York and Montreal, became the true father of Oregon. All these in-roads into the west originated in Montreal. In 1812, the North West Company alone employed more than 1300 persons and Montreal was living off the profits of the beaver trade as it had never done before, even in the most prosperous days of New France.⁷

Looking back, the years of transition marked the last attempts by Montreal merchants to bend politics to suit the geographical and economic realities of the continent. *Cersion* With the Conquest, the British had inherited a homogeneous economic empire centered around the rivers as a communications network. However, a major event, the insurrection of the American colonies against England, was to precipitate the network's disintegration and Montreal gradually lost its continental leadership.

Thus, the Treaty of Paris in 1783 sanctioned the victory of the colonies over the *mother* master country, and heralded drastic changes for Montreal. The new frontier with the United States cut through Montreal's natural hinterland, depriving it of the huge territories south of the Great Lakes, between the Ohio and the Mississippi Rivers. The new frontier also cut across the traditional roads of the fur traders which explains why the trade expanded towards the Arctic and the Pacific. This new orientation did not favour Montreal: the gradual increase in transportation costs made it less competitive and the North West Company was absorbed by the Hudson Bay Company in 1821. Later on, the beaver trade moved to the Bay and Montreal lost its main commercial activity after leading the fur trade for almost 200 years.

On the other hand, the war of independence by the

thirteen colonies caused an exodus of loyalist emigrants who came to settle in British America, especially in Upper Canada along the St. Lawrence River and the Ottawa River. The new colonization pushed back the forests and more land was cultivated; a new export market developed, mainly for timber and wheat. The Napoleonic wars and the continental blockade created a need for wood, and between 1800 and 1820, the timber trade suddenly soared. At the same time, Montreal ceased to be a frontier town buried in the midst of the continental forest and gradually assumed a new economic significance as the shipping point for new resources and a receiving port for manufactured goods. Such goods became increasingly necessary as the population of Upper Canada grew from 158,000 inhabitants in 1825 to 347,000 inhabitants ten years later.⁸ From the status of key-town in a continental empire, Montreal in the nineteenth century became the national harbour of a growing country.

Yet, the consequences of the American rebellion did not end there. It was more than a struggle for freedom from imperial ties: it concealed a struggle between social classes, a struggle of the new capitalist bourgeoisie against the aristocracy and against the perpetuation of the feudal structures it stood for. This struggle was carried over into Canada by the merchants.

It started immediately after the Conquest. Two groups were facing one another: on one side, the anglophone merchants, American and British were rushing in to reap the profits of a new market and to participate in the administration of public affairs and on the other side, the officials of the British Crown, recruited from the ranks of a conservative aristocracy, were determined to maintain their position and the privileges of their class. Governors like Murray or Carleton would not hear of demands made by merchants like Walker or du Calvet who were clamouring for a new social order in which all individuals would be equal. In fact, Murray and Carleton were merely replacing Frontenac and Vaudreuil: the absolute rule of the old regime was merely replaced by the absolute rule of the new regime and a society based on the social usefulness of groups tended to perpetuate itself on the shores of the St. Lawrence. The Catholic Church now had absolute power in its field and, much to its benefit, preached this static conception of society to the small French Canadian nation. The anglophone bourgeoisie would soon fashion its future after its own ideals.

The history of the years of transition in Montreal clearly shows that the real power gradually moved from the Château de Ramezay, residence of the governors, and from the Old Seminary, residence of the seigneurs of the Island of

what
happened
to reach
this?

Montreal, to the urban "châteaux" of the rich merchants. One of these "châteaux" was the Château St-Antoine, where William McGillivray, nephew of Simon McTavish, and like him a powerful fur magnate, lived like a lord and enjoyed a magnificent view of the city and of the river. Beaver Hall (at the corner of Beaver Hall Hill Street and de la Gauchetière Street) was another manor where Joseph Frobisher gave many a reception. It was surrounded by about 40 acres of forests and apple trees. Simon McTavish, Montreal's King of the fur trade, often called the "First" or the "Marquis", built, near the top of the street which today bears his name, a large stone "château" over one hundred and twenty-six feet wide. It is most unfortunate that these three bourgeois residences have disappeared today, for they would have remained as historical landmarks of the takeover of power in Montreal by a capitalist bourgeoisie. A study of their architecture could have informed us better of the aspirations of that particular class.

The great merchants left their mark on the city's evolution. They were the first to have a residence separated from their place of work and for the first time, the rich were separated from the poor. The fur magnates withdrew from the city as if the human hive were but a means of providing for their comfort on the virgin, airy slopes of Mount Royal. The rich bourgeois had merely borrowed from the aristocrats the

external marks which identified the latters' status, namely the "château" and a large estate. The anglophones settled in the most beautiful spots, thus starting a trend, characteristic of Montreal, towards the subdivision of the city along ethnic and social lines.

In order to better understand the influence of the great merchants on the life and development of the city, we might look into the activities of one of the most famous among them: James McGill, McGill was born in Glasgow, on October 6, 1744. He registered at Glasgow University but did not stay there very long, for he was soon involved up to his neck in the fur trade. He soon became very prosperous and settled in Montreal in 1774, where he was to play a major part in Canada's fur trade. But he did not stop at that: he distinguished himself by his philanthropic and civic spirit. One way or another, he was connected with just about every improvement brought to Montreal during the years of transition. He was one of the Commissioners in charge of the demolition of the old fortified wall, a task which he brought to completion and on which we shall comment later. He was a prison administrator, chairman of the volunteer fire brigade, a member of the building committee of Christ Church Anglican Cathedral, representative for Montreal West at the Legislative Assembly and a member of the Legislative Council. It was mainly his Burnside estate

which would link his name to the city's history. Like most rich Montreal merchants, McGill had acquired a vast estate of some 46 acres. A few years before his death, which occurred on December 12, 1813, he bequeathed his estate together with a substantial sum of money for the purpose of promoting education in the province. McGill University was the outcome of that gift; it soon acquired an international reputation. A large section of its magnificent campus is located on the old Burnside estate (north of Sherbrooke Street, between McTavish Street and University Street): it is still one of the most positive contributions to the urban landscape of our metropolis.⁹

Architecturally, the years of transition saw more interesting contributions. Official and social architecture revealed the variety as well as the rivalries of ethnic groups living in Montreal. At first glance, the architecture of each group appeared to have inherited the same classical spirit, but the motivations were far from being identical; nor, for that matter, were the architectures themselves.

Imperialism was the predominant characteristic of the British ruling class. It was only natural, for this class never doubted the superiority of British institutions: England was, after all, the most powerful nation in the world as well as the metropolis of the largest empire the world had ever known. About the golden age which, in England, followed the

peace of Paris in 1763, John Summerson said... "it was an age which combined confidence and vitality, security and adventure..."¹⁰. Hence, it was only natural for colonizers to import from the fatherland their architectural models, selected from the vast classical repertoire of the eighteenth century. Thus, Christ Church, the first Anglican Cathedral in Montreal, followed the great architectural tradition of churches designed by Sir Christopher Wren (1632-1723) and by James Gibbs (1682-1754). The model for the Anglican Cathedral in Quebec City was the famous Church of St-Martin-in-the-Fields (1721-1726) on London's Trafalgar Square, a masterpiece by Gibbs. It was no accident, indeed, for, in the mind of Quebec's Anglican Archbishop, Jacob Mountain, the Church of St-Martin-in-the-Fields constituted the most representative piece of architecture erected by the virtuous and perfect English society of the eighteenth century.¹¹ In the province, the British espoused a kind of colonial classicism, healthy, conscious and rather heavy, extolling the virtues of strength, confidence and superiority in which the colonizers believed at the time. Architecture was then a symbol. In those days, the same attitude prevailed in American architecture.

The Americans, some of whom came to Canada after the War of Independence (208 in Montreal in 1779), were familiar with the traditions of British classical architecture. The

tradition had reached the American coast in the first decade of the eighteenth century: from 1720 on, Boston became the center of diffusion of the architectural ideals and theories of Wren, Vanbrugh, Nicholas, Hawksmoor and James Gibbs.¹² The revolution of 1775 and the triumph of the middle classes over aristocracy changed many things. The colonies' armies had defeated proud England and become a republic. The new republic would no longer seek its architectural models in defeated England, now considered corrupt, but in the antique republics of Athens and Rome, idealizing their virtues and moral strength. Lewis Mumford defined this state of mind... "It was the Revolution itself ... that turned the classical taste into a myth which had the power to move men..."¹³. This explains why works like James Stuart's (1713-1788) book entitled Antiquities of Athens (1762) was so appreciated by the Americans. They quickly abandoned the palladian and georgian models for those of antique architecture with a predilection for "la maison carrée" of Nîmes which, through mimetism, would be reproduced again and again on this side of the Atlantic Ocean.¹⁴ In the Montreal region, the influence of American local classicism was not as pronounced as in the regions where loyalists had settled, namely Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Upper Canada. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, waves of Americans who had known the post-revolutionary period settled in Canada. With them came a

form of romantic neo-classicism, inspired by greco-roman models, which soon found its way into Montreal's public architecture.

French Canadian architecture of that time showed signs of the influence of the classical traditions of the eighteenth century. As we have seen earlier, it was the preferred mode of architectural expression of the ruling class: we even saw to what extent its influence had pervaded the humble domestic urban architecture as attested by la Maison du Patriote or la Maison del Vecchio. La Maison Papineau, on Bonsecours Street, which has been recently restored to its original splendour (circa 1830), provides a better example. The balance and harmony of full and empty surfaces as well as its good proportions, the accent on horizontal linearity and the interior decoration, are all elements which contribute in making this house a specimen of domestic architecture belonging to this tradition.¹⁵

After the Conquest, the Quebec elite remained faithful to the classical tradition. It flourished in religious architecture, a further proof of the predominant role of the Catholic Church in French Canadian society. Two men who complemented each other, Jérôme Demers and Thomas Baillargé, were responsible for this trend. The former was a priest and was Director of the Seminary of Quebec from the beginning of the nineteenth century on. He was an avid theoretician and a

protagonist of classical architecture. The architecture he proposed was rational, gracious, refined, lighter than the heavy classicism of the conquerors and closer to French Louis XVI institutional classicism. His main sources were Vignole, Blondel, d'Aviler and the Book of Architecture by Gibbs; he even wrote a Précis d'architecture, the better to spread his doctrines among the students of the Seminary.¹⁶ Thomas Baillargé was the last representative of the Baillargé dynasty of architects, sculptors, painters and contractors from Quebec. He was the executor of Demers' ideas. He took his apprenticeship within the framework of the traditional craft of the province and was associated with his brother François who had studied in Paris. With l'Abbé Demers, he acquired a deep knowledge of classicism and put his knowledge into practice in a most creative manner. His name and his art are linked with some of the most precious achievements of religious architecture in Quebec during the first half of the nineteenth century. In the Montreal region, he built Ste-Geneviève Church in Pierrefonds, a construction which he started in 1849. The purity and universality of Thomas Baillargé's classicism have survived, in spite of the many alterations the church has undergone.¹⁷

Demers and Baillargé came originally from the Quebec region, where traditions were more solidly entrenched than in Montreal. In the metropolis, classicism was regarded as

provincial and antiquated. The church wardens of Notre-Dame turned down a plan by Thomas Baillargé for the reconstruction of their church. Indeed, in order to maintain its rank and prestige, the Catholic Church of Montreal had to countervail the cold, imperial classicism of Christ Church Anglican Cathedral, built but a short distance away from the venerable Notre-Dame parish Church. Demers and Baillargé's French classicism must have seemed both too bare and too timid: upholding the superiority of Catholicism over Protestantism demanded a style altogether more convincing and more symbolic of the ongoing struggle for the protection of existing values. At this point in time, there occurred an event which was to mark the history of architecture in Montreal and in Canada: the building of Notre-Dame in a neo-gothic style. This event officially inaugurated the era of Victorian architecture in the Province and it is rather surprising to see the most conservative of all ethnic groups living in Montreal taking the first step.

2. The Plan of the Commissioners

If we set aside the old grid of streets inherited from the Sulpician Dollier de Casson, a visit to Old Montreal and to its neighbourhood reveals that urban development occurred spontaneously. Place Jacques-Cartier, Place d'Youville, the Champ-de-Mars, Craig Street, McGill Street, Victoria Square and other familiar landmarks appear to have developed out of

the successive transformations of a growing organism rather than according to a set plan. Moreover, like in other large American cities, land speculation seems to have been the sole spur to physical development in Montreal. Yet, this is not quite true as far as the years of transition are concerned.

As early as 1799, the Parliament of Lower Canada introduced a resolution aimed at the orderly development of Montreal and Quebec. The resolution called for the nomination of an inspector responsible for the drafting of plans for the town and its surroundings, for the opening of wide streets and the preservation of land for public squares. Parliament had already acknowledged that it was

nécessaire et utile au public que les divisions se fassent d'après un plan régulier avec l'ouverture des rues suffisantes et nécessaires et réserves de places publiques pour le besoin à venir... (and) qu'à compter du jour que tel plan sera ainsi homologué, il ne sera permis ni loisible à aucun propriétaire desdits terrains de les vendre ou diviser par emplacements, pour y bâtir ou pour y clore aucun verger ou jardin, à moins qu'il ne se conforme en tout audit plan et ne réserve les rues ou places publiques qui y seront désignées et représentées...¹⁸.

All this sounds very modern and very much like today's town-planning practices.

Two years later, a unique opportunity to apply the resolution presented itself: the demolition of the old

walls of Montreal which by then were hindering development.

On April 8, 1801, the Lieutenant Governor gave Royal assent to a bill entitled "Acte pour abattre les anciens murs et fortifications qui entourent la cité de Montréal, et pour pourvoir autrement à la salubrité, commodité et embellissement de la dite cité"¹⁹. To the mover of this bill, convenience and embellishment or the functional and esthetic aspects happen to go together.

In order to complete the task, three commissioners were appointed: the Honorable James McGill, the public minded merchant; the Honorable John Richardson, born in England, who had first immigrated to the United States, then to Canada (1787) where he gained quite a reputation for his prosperity as well as for his dedication to civic duties; and finally, Jean-Marie Mondelet, a notary by profession who, like many representatives of the new French Canadian elite, distinguished himself in politics as a member of Parliament for Montreal West. They were to look after the demolition of the old walls and fulfill two obligations. First, they were to return to their legitimate owners or their legal heirs all land expropriated for the construction of the fortifications under the French regime. Secondly, they were to submit a plan for subsequent improvements and establish the cost of such improvements.²⁰

The plan would have later repercussions on the

physiognomy of Montreal. Joseph Bouchette, Chief Surveyor for Lower Canada knew the plan well. He was born in the colony, in May 1774. As an adolescent, he had already shown great talent in the art of drawing geographical maps and landscapes. When only 30 years old, he became Head of the surveyors' offices and held this position until his death in Montreal in 1841. He had a passion for statistics: he spent his life gathering data on the province and the British Dominion. He published the result of his compilation in several books, among which were a Description topographique de la province du Bas-Canada, published in 1815, and an important research on topography and statistics of the British provinces published in London in 1831. He received congratulations from the Regent, two medals and the envied title of corresponding member of the London Society of Arts and Sciences, but his expenses ruined him financially. All this attests to his zeal and dedication to public interest²¹.

Joseph Bouchette was all praise for the improvements suggested by the Commissioners. Here is what he had to say in his very detailed Description topographique of 1815:

Lorsque l'acte rendu par le
Parlement provincial en 1801
"pour enlever les anciennes mu-
railles et les fortifications qui
entourent la ville de Montréal,
et pour pourvoir à la salubrité,

à la commodité, et à l'embellissement de la dite ville", aura été mis en exécution, suivant le plan projeté, aucune des possessions extérieures de l'Angleterre, excepté celles de l'Inde, n'offrira une ville aussi belle, aussi régulière, aussi étendue, ni aussi commode que celle-ci.²²

An elevated terrace was to extend along the river from Pointe-à-Callières to the "faubourg de Québec". It was to be used as a street and serve as a rampart against ice-floats which covered the Common every spring; it would also be used as a fire-breaker against fire which could start at any moment amidst the huge stocks of lumber stacked on the shore. This was to be a welcome improvement over previous conditions, for several observers had described the pitiful state of the shore. Compared to present conditions, one dreams of an esplanade where one would be able to walk and, at last, admire the river. Another improvement concerned the small St-Pierre River separating Pointe-à-Callières from the Coteau St-Louis. A road was to be built on either side of the river to reduce its width to 20 feet. The plan provided for a similar canal in the middle of St-Augustin Street (today's McGill Street) which was to link the St-Pierre Canal with a canal yet to be dug from the St-Martin Creek. The old town would be physically separated from the adjacent suburbs, except on the "Faubourg de Québec" side. The projected improvements were

imperative, judging from a comment by Count Colbert de Maulevrier who in 1798 mentioned that "derrière les murs de la ville, au Nord, est un ruisseau bourbeux qu'on pourrait aisément changer en un canal, qui ajouterait à la salubrité de l'endroit au lieu d'y nuire comme à présent"²⁴. Circular ponds were to be dug out at the intersections of the canals and buildings on the shore were to stand 30 feet away from the shore of the canals in order to form airy lanes 80 feet wide.

Among other improvements, St. James Street was to be extended from the Faubourg des Récollets to the Faubourg de Québec and widened to 60 feet. Another street, 24 feet in width, was to be opened midway between St. James Street and Craig Street. It is today's Ruelle des Fortifications to the west and rue du Champ-de-Mars to the east. A public square, measuring 174 feet by 208 feet was projected for the location where the old Porte de Québec stood. Another square measuring 180 feet by 468 feet was projected for the south-west corner of Craig Street and St. Augustin Street which would later become the Marché aux Foins (Hay Market). Today, the square has been extended northwest to Vitré Street and is called Victoria Square. The old Place d'Armes was to be enlarged to 344 feet by 392 feet and extended to the Craig Street Canal. The Champ-de-Mars was to be extended to the Craig Street Canal and was to constitute an esplanade 114 toises by 57 toises, in order

to be large enough for military drills and parades. At the time of Bouchette's writings, these improvements had almost been completed; trees had even been planted and benches installed in an open invitation to the citizens to come and admire the magnificent panorama of Faubourg St-Laurent and of the cultivated slopes of the island's second terrace (today called Sherbrooke Terrace). All that remains today of the redesigned Champ-de-Mars is a huge, faceless parking lot. A last important improvement concerned the new Market Place which was to replace the old one which had become too small for the growing population. The new Market Place was relocated in the eastern section of the small town where the Château de Vaudreuil used to stand surrounded by gardens. It is today's Place Jacques-Cartier, a long rectangle extending from Notre-Dame Street to Commissioners Street.²³ (Pl. 23)

For commissioners who were working for nothing and whose only claim to competence in the field lay in their dedication to their civic duties, carrying out so many improvements was quite an accomplishment. In their plan, the Commissioners were aware that the old town constituted a homogeneous entity and that the most recent suburbs had to be hinged on to it in a structurally identifiable manner. Thus, a public square (Victoria) and a wide street, St-Augustin Street, connected the old town to Faubourg St-Laurent via Craig Street and the canal,

and to Faubourg de Québec via Dalhousie Square.

However, the Commissioners' plans were drawn to the scale of Montreal as they saw it in those days, without as much as a hint of how industrialization in the second half of the nineteenth century was about to upset that very scale. McGill and Craig Streets may have been splendid in 1800: today they are quite ordinary. It is unfortunate that the Commissioners allowed the area west of McGill to be developed and that rue St-Louis, rue du Champ-de-Mars and Ruelle des Fortifications were opened. The fortifications had been built on land which, after their demolition, should have been kept by the city and returned to its natural state. A green band extending along the old town, between St. James Street and Craig Street, would have created quite a feeling of space. Coming back to McGill, Richardson and Mondelet, let us now see how their project was executed.

A map of the city drawn by John Adams in 1825 constitutes a good working document. Very few of the projected improvements were not carried out or were carried out in a different manner. Thus, no canal ever ran in the middle of St-Augustin Street, later renamed McGill Street in honour of the Commissioner. Place d'Armes was never extended to Craig Street. This is unfortunate, for an enlarged Place d'Armes would have been more in proportion to the enormous new Notre-Dame Church,

built along one of its sides. A better visual relationship would have been achieved between that monument and the rest of the city, namely the Sherbrooke Terrace. However, all other improvements were carried out with the odd minor change. (Pl. 24)

This does not mean that the Commissioners had only to impose their will to achieve their ends. They often had to seize upon opportunities to bring about certain improvements, as in the case of the creation of the new Market Place, later named Place Jacques-Cartier. It all started, as it so often happens in Montreal, with a disastrous fire. On Monday, June 6, 1803, fire started in a house of Faubourg St-Laurent; driven by strong winds, it spread to the buildings on Coteau St-Louis after destroying dozens of buildings in the Faubourg. The prison was burnt down, as well as a large section of the Jesuits' establishment, a dozen houses and the College de Montréal which used to be the Château de Vaudreuil. Some time later, two fairly rich bourgeois, Joseph Périnault and J.B. Durrocher, whose only bond lay in their business acumen, became interested in the ruins, for they had engineered a neat speculative deal. On December 14 of the same year, they bought the old Château's ruins with its outbuildings and gardens. Then, with calculated liberality, they presented the city with approximately one third of the land they had bought, but with the express condition that the city erect a market place on the



24. Plan of the town and suburbs of Montreal in 1825, by John Adams.

25. Place Jacques-Cartier in 1896.



site. As soon as the offer was accepted, the two speculators subdivided the remainder of the land into seven building lots, which they offered for sale at a high price, for the lots would now border on the new Market Place. Within two days, all the lots were sold: Périnault and Durocher had made a small fortune and Montreal had a new public square.²⁵ (Pl. 25)

The creation of Dalhousie Square, which the Commissioners had intended to locate near the old Porte de Québec, occurred in a very different manner. The old Citadel, perched on a hillock at the end of Notre-Dame Street, became redundant following the demolition of the fortifications, between 1801 and 1817, and also as the result of the purchase by the Imperial government, in 1818, of the St. Helen's Island where a military post overlooking the entrance to the Port of Montreal would be built. As the hillock hindered the development of the city, it was decided to level it and a contract was signed for that purpose on August 14, 1819, with the Bagg and Wait Company. The soil removed would be used to complete the Champ-de-Mars esplanade and to fill the swamps of Faubourg St-Louis. Once the hillock had disappeared, M. Louis Charland, who was a surveyor and roads inspector for the City, was ordered by the Commissioners to draw plans for the utilization of that land by the City. Following a rather amusing series of incidents involving influence peddling, Jacques Viger, the future first Mayor of

Montreal, stole the limelight from Charland and managed to have his own plan accepted. The latter consisted of extending Notre-Dame Street and St-Paul Street to a public square, later named Dalhousie, after Lord Dalhousie, who would offer it as a present to the municipality in September, 1823. It would soon become an elegant residential district, much sought after by rich citizens. But not for long. In July 1852, a fire levelled all the buildings on the square. A few decades later, the square was to disappear altogether, as it was dug to a depth of 30 feet to accomodate Viger Station. This site had been the town's highest point during the French regime: it was now the lowest point of the industrial city. Such fate was symbolic of the transformations which Victorian Montreal was to undergo.²⁶

During the years of transition, public squares multiplied in the city and suburbs. Dalhousie square was one. Place d'Armes became a square, in the proper sense of the term, when the old Notre-Dame Church was demolished and the new one was built on the edge of the square. The Hay Market would become Victoria Square. In Faubourg St-Laurent, Viger Market would become Viger Square after being considerably enlarged. At the far end of Faubourg de Québec, Papineau Square was built at the end of Papineau Street. In 1830, Square Chaboillez was created in Faubourg des Récollets and Richmond Square in Faubourg St-Antoine.

Squares proliferated under the British influence, for the British had perfected this particular urban concept, especially during the Georgian era (1714-1830), during which London acquired its most beautiful squares. In terms of utilization of space, there is a great deal of difference between the continental squares like the ones Montreal had inherited from the French regime and the typical British square. A comparison between Place d'Armes under the old regime and the same square around the year 1840 shows the difference. Under the French colonial regime, the church was located in the middle of the square, on the axis of Notre-Dame Street. This manner of highlighting a monument by placing it at the far end of a visual perspective is more characteristic of the classical continental square than of the British square. The reaction of John Duncan, an Englishman who pestered against the location of the old church, is very revealing indeed. Said he: "Notre-Dame Street ... is however unfortunately broken into separate portions by the principal French Church, which ... has been awkwardly set down in the very centre of the street"²⁷. The typical English square is an intimate open space, self-contained, located without any didactic intention; it is meant only for the enjoyment and satisfaction of its residents. This is more or less what Place d'Armes would look like in the nineteenth century, when the new Notre-Dame Church was built on the edge of the square. Trees

were planted in 1848, and the year after, a fountain graced the square which was then surrounded by a high cast iron fence.²⁸

There are many other areas where the influence of the new masters altered the city's image. Thus, for instances, under the French colonial regime, Notre-Dame parish Church had been the focal point of the town, and Place d'Armes one of the most significant centres for social contact. One hundred years later, the picture was radically altered. Place d'Armes became a simple residential square with a church on one of its sides, while the Champ-de-Mars, an artificial esplanade turning its back to the old town, became a meeting place for the citizenry, "a favourite promenade in the summer evenings, and the principal scene of military displays", according to the same John Duncan.²⁹

New suburbs appeared and the old ones were extensively developed during the years of transition, as the Adams map of 1825 indicates. According to a census taken the same year, out of a population of 26,154 (14,830 francophones and 11,324 anglophones) only 5,316 inhabitants were living inside the old fortified town; this represented 20% of the total figure.³⁰ The census covered the whole territory of the new administrative boundaries of the city, i.e. some 1,020 acres versus 100 acres for the territory of the old fortified town. The new administrative territory was established on May 7, 1792

by a proclamation of the Parliament of Lower Canada. It corresponded to a parallelogram bounded by the River and by an imaginary line drawn one hundred land chains away from and parallel to the old fortified walls. Today, the same boundaries would correspond roughly to Atwater to the west, to Pine Avenue to the north, and to rue d'Iberville to the east. The same proclamation of May 7, 1792 stipulated that the town would henceforth be divided into two districts, called respectively the western district and the eastern district, with St. Lawrence Boulevard as a demarcation line between the two.³¹ This is how our custom of dividing the city into an east end and a west end originated, even though geographically speaking, this is an absurd distinction. Indeed, Montreal is shaped like a boomerang, and what we call the east end of the city lies in fact more to the north, and St. Lawrence Boulevard runs more from east to west than from north to south.

Five of the suburbs had now grown to respectable sizes. St-Laurent, the largest and also the most populated of the five, lay about the axis of St. Lawrence Street, thus named because originally it led to the village of St-Laurent. Faubourg de Québec was the most aristocratic among the five, but only for a time, for later on it would be referred to as the "Faubourg à la mélasse" (Molasses suburb). It was centered around Ste-Marie Street, which was itself a north-east extension

of Notre-Dame Street. In the opposite direction, two suburbs developed: St-Antoine along the extension of Craig Street, and Faubourg des Récollets, also called St-Joseph, along the southwest extension of Notre-Dame Street. Griffin Town developed south of Pointe-à-Callières. It used to belong to the nuns of l'Hôtel-Dieu and was then leased to an Irish protestant, Robert Griffin, who would subdivide it and name it after himself. The land was marshy, rather insalubrious and regularly flooded. Therefore, it attracted mainly poor immigrants, most of them Irish, who settled there because industries employing cheap labour were established in that district.

A closer study of one of these suburbs reveals some interesting facts. Urban development was in the process of altering its course from a northeast-southwest orientation parallel to Notre-Dame Street to an orientation perpendicular to the latter, i.e. northwest-southeast and parallel to St. Lawrence Boulevard. St. Lawrence Boulevard would henceforth be the axis of demographic growth while the river banks and the parallel arteries like Notre-Dame, St. James and St. Catherine became the axis of economic growth. The regularity, uniformity and anonymous character of the grid of streets was remarkable. By now the grid looked like a construct, for as it reached the steep second terrace of the island, it did not seem adapted to the natural topography. Unlike the old town, the new suburb

of St-Laurent was not centered around the organs of community life; it was the result of a uniform, amorphous development. The erection, from 1823 on, of St. James Cathedral and of the Bishop's Palace on the northeast corner of St-Denis and Ste-Catherine Streets could have constituted a strong polarization center. Unfortunately, following the fire of 1852, which razed the whole area, both the cathedral and the palace were re-built on the side of Dominion Square. Another attempt at reviving the district by locating the University of Montreal in the area failed miserably at the turn of the century. At present (1972), a new attempt is being made by centralizing l'University du Québec in that same area.

In this suburb, as in others, there were as yet no lanes. Most houses were one-family dwellings, wider than they were deep, like the ones analyzed in the previous chapter. Such a building pattern was still possible because the front of the lots was wide enough to allow passage, often through a gateway, to the back of the lots. With time, demographic and economic pressures would reduce the frontage to a minimum of 25 pieds and houses would have to be oriented towards the back of the lot. The lane became the new way of reaching the far end of the lots. This way, more houses could be lined up on the same street and the cost for equipment and services were kept down. As we shall see in the next chapter, it had marked

advantages.

The quality of life had been greatly improved during the years of transition. From 1801 on, a system of aqueducts brought drinkable water to Montreal, whereas before it was only available from a few wells. At the beginning, spring water was collected from the mountains by means of wooden ducts; from 1819 on, they were replaced by cast iron ducts. Protection against fire was also better organized, still on a voluntary basis, but in a more efficient manner which would gradually evolve into our present day system. Street lighting progressed equally rapidly. Due to the pressures of merchants, St-Paul Street became the first street in Montreal to be lit with oil lamps from 1815 onwards. Others would follow and gas light was introduced in 1830. In 1818, the municipality got its first contingent of 24 policemen or "night watchmen". All these innovations seem trivial today. Nevertheless, they were essential landmarks in the development of a normal urban life.

3. The Image of the City

In those days, how did visitors react to Montreal, when they saw the city for the first time? Most of them agreed that viewed from the river, it was a very striking sight. In 1807, George Heriot, who had travelled across both Upper and Lower Canada published in London an account of his journey. In his opinion, Montreal was best viewed from St. Helen's

Island.³³ A landscape painted in 1828 by James Gray, in the manner of Epinal, gives us an idea of the exceptional background provided by Mount Royal with fields and orchards all over the hill. Another Englishman, John Lambert, who visited Montreal, probably in the same year, was very impressed by the city's unusual profile, by the light grey hues of the houses, and by the sun's reflection on the tin roofs.³⁴ This impression of the town was shared by a certain J.E. Alexander:

"Montreal had a most inviting appearance as we approached - the high and varied roofs, covered with shining tin, rivaling in brightness the broad and sparkling mirror of the St. Lawrence..."³⁵

Another traveller, John Duncan, a Glasgow University graduate whose travelogue expressed sound and sometimes stern judgments was also very much impressed by the sight of Montreal. In 1818, he wrote: "From the opposite bank the town has a showy appearance, and in summer the circumjacent scenery is exceedingly beautiful."³⁶ Adam Fergusson, another Scotsman, touring Canada in 1831, was even more articulate:

The city looks very handsome, as it is approached from Prairie; and the glistening tin-roofs of houses, nunneries, and churches, give it an appearance of splendour, rarely equalled, while the mountain, with its woods and rocks, its orchards and villas, forms a beautiful and romantic background to the picture.³⁷

However, the enthusiasm of some visitors often

cooled down once inside the town. They were dismayed by its dark, narrow streets, which appeared grim and surly. Isaac Weld, an Irishman from Dublin, whose account of his visit to North America in 1796 met with considerable success, noted that the houses of the lower town were gloomy and reminded him of a prison.³⁸ In 1820, Edward Talbot whose opinion can be trusted, since he spent five years in Canada, made what is perhaps the most upsetting description of the city:

Il est impossible de se promener dans les rues de Montréal, un dimanche ou un jour de fête, lorsque toutes les boutiques sont fermées, sans éprouver les plus tristes impressions. Toute la ville paraît alors une vaste prison, et à chaque bruit qui vient frapper l'oreille de l'étranger qui passe, il croit entendre le son des chaînes du malfaiteur, ou les gémissements lamentables d'un débiteur incarcéré.³⁹

Theodore Pavie, who seems to have been a very keen observer, explained this in a much simpler way when he wrote in his "Souvenirs atlantiques" published in Paris in 1833:

Les maisons sont toutes bâties en pierres grises, qui répandent un aspect sombre sur ces rues longues et resserrées; ce qui frappe surtout les yeux d'un étranger, c'est la blancheur des toits tout couverts en fer-blanc, et les contrevents doublés en tôle, pour prévenir les incendies; cette manière de construire cause une grande monotonie...⁴⁰

Fortunately, such unfavourable opinions are not

shared by everybody. Joseph Bouchette, for one, was not quite so ^{out} unspoken. According to him, the streets, and especially the new ones, were airy and reasonably wide; and though the houses were indeed made of grey stone, he had seen several large, attractive modern ones. In 1815, he wrote: "In its present state, Montreal certainly deserves to be called a beautiful city."⁴¹ Since the chief surveyor of Lower Canada was Canadian born, he naturally did not see the city from the same angle as a foreigner; nor did he consider it with the same critical eye.

His testimony, however, corroborates the view of Benjamin Silliman, whose observations are noteworthy, for he was a distinguished geologist from Yale University. Silliman maintained that the quality of a landscape and the mentality of the people it surrounded were closely related to the geological characteristics of the land; he was also one of the first to give a valid geographical description of the province of Quebec. Open-minded and well travelled, he had a solid basis for making comparisons when he visited Montreal in 1819, for he had been to England, Holland and Scotland and had published on account of his travels there.

He noted in his "Remarks on Short Tour Between Hartford and Québec" that Montreal had the outside appearance of an European town and, more specifically, of a continental

town, because it was built of stone, after the old fashion. Besides, he did not hide his admiration: "I was, I confess, much gratified at entering, for the first time, an American city built of stone." He praised the quality of the limestone used in Montreal, adding that it was just as handsome and durable as the famous Portland stone in England and that... "a number of the modern houses of Montreal, and of its environs, which are constructed of this stone, handsomely hewn, are very beautiful, and would be ornaments to the City of London, or to Westminster itself."⁴² As a geologist, he may have been prone to professional bias. Silliman willingly admitted that the American visitors, more familiar with brick and lumber, were likely to find Montreal dark and gloomy. Still, he stated his marked preference for stone because of its structural and plastic qualities. He was perhaps the first American in Canada to find something he wanted to imitate... "Montreal is certainly a fine town of its kind, and it were much to be wished that the people of the United States would imitate the Canadians, by constructing their houses, wherever practicable, of stone."⁴³

Silliman's remarks were to be echoed a few years later by J.E. Alexander, a widely travelled man who stayed for a while in Montreal after visiting the two American continents. He too regarded it as an interesting city... "interesting because it has an air of stability and antiquity about

it, and does not savour of the "shavings and paints" of the new cities in the States..."⁴⁴.

Such contradictory testimonies might lead us to believe that Montreal, during the years of transition, was not, after all, as grand and impressive as Bouchette and Silliman had depicted it; nor was it as dull and depressing as Weld and Talbot had described it. On the other hand, visitors from Europe certainly viewed it in a different way from American-born travellers. To the former, the small town had preserved some of the characteristic features of the traditional village, while in the eye of the latter, Montreal held the promise of a unique future. This difference in perception is still noticeable today, depending on whether visitors are coming from the Old World or from the New World.

At any rate, there is no lack of positive data. Bosworth, for instance, found that St. Paul Street, the main business thoroughfare, could easily have been wider but that it could nevertheless compare with "some of the central streets in London, but without their fog and smoke"⁴⁵. Most observers agreed with Joseph Bouchette, when he praised Notre-Dame Street for being "by much the handsomest street in the place"⁴⁶ and described it as the rich merchants' residential area and the site of most of the public buildings in the town among which were the church of the Récollets, Notre-Dame parish

Church, the episcopalian Christ Church, the Court House, the prison and the Château de Ramezay. They also commended the Commissioners for the improvements they had brought about such as the spacious Place Jacques-Cartier, the elegant Dalhousie Square and especially the Champ-de-Mars, considered in those days as the ideal place for walks on a summer evening. Lambert extolled the view one could enjoy over Faubourg St-Laurent and Faubourg St-Antoine from that particular spot,⁴⁷ while Theodore Pavic hailed it as "une des plus délicieuses positions" he had ever seen in any city.⁴⁸ (Pl. 32)

Let us now turn to private buildings. Except for a few large mansions belonging to rich merchants which have long ago disappeared and about which we have but scarce data, the average house had no architectural pretensions.

We have already described in the previous chapter La Maison du Patriote, La Maison del Vecchio, La Maison de la Sauvegarde as well as other houses. The old town houses were generally made of stone, in the traditional way and free-stone was used increasingly. In Hadfield's opinion, only a few of these houses could boast of any elegance.⁴⁹ In his Journal of 1785 he wrote that in the suburbs, where they were generally made of wood, they were quite insignificant. Weld agreed on their lack of elegance but found them at least very comfortable.⁵⁰ One suburban villa worth mentioning is Monkland House.

According to Massicotte, it was built at the end of the eighteenth century after the plans of a castle in Scotland.⁵¹ In the middle of the following century, it was considerably altered, then decorated in the Italian fashion by Architect Brown in order to turn it into a suitable residence for Lord Elgin, then Governor General. Later, in 1854, it was purchased by the sisters of the Congregation of Notre-Dame who converted it into a select boarding-school under the name of Villa Maria. Today, its significance is somewhat blurred by the success of the institution it continues to house and by the additions made to the original building.⁵²

This brings us to the subject of public buildings: are there any that may be traced back to the period following the Cession? Few were built and fewer still deserve our attention. From an architectural point of view, the following may yield some valuable information: the new parish Church of Notre-Dame, Christ Church Cathedral, the Bank of Montreal, the Hôtel-de-France, the Old Customs House, the Court House and the prison. Except for the Old Customs House and the Church of Notre-Dame, they have unfortunately all disappeared. Leaving the Church of Notre-Dame for the end of the present chapter, let us look briefly at the other buildings, resorting to engravings and contemporary writings when needed.

From an architectural standpoint, they are of

unequal quality. In the opinion of John Duncan, not one of them could even be described as elegant and we tend to share this view. According to him, the most interesting were the Court House and the old prison,⁵³ a view which was shared by Lambert, Bouchette, Silliman, Fergusson and Sir Bonnycastle.⁵⁴ Another visitor, James Silk Buckingham went as far as saying that the Court House was "one of the best ornaments of the town."⁵⁵ Both buildings were erected on Notre-Dame Street, on a former property of the Jesuits which, following the Cession, had been declared Crown land. They stood approximately on the site shared by the present Old Court House and Place Vauquelin. Built in 1800 and 1806 respectively, they were typical of British colonial classicism: quiet and stately, with an air of aloof self confidence. Their location, adjacent to the Champ-de-Mars, was largely responsible for their prestige: had they been placed in different surroundings, they might have failed to attract any attention.

There is no reason either to unduly praise the Bank of Montreal Building erected in the spring of 1818 on St. James Street, even though Talbot described it as "le plus bel édifice public ou particulier" in both Canadas.⁵⁶ As the first building in the country strictly designed as a bank, it retained the air of an upper middle class residence. Its architect remains unknown but he must have come originally from

Scotland or from Ireland, for the austere freestone façade and interior decoration of this building are strongly reminiscent of a Georgian style prevalent in both countries. A sketch by John Murray, drawn around 1850, shows its vaguely doric porch; it seems rather out of scale, but the façade's proportions are correct. In 1847, the bank was transferred to neighbouring premises and in 1870, the original building was pulled down to make room for the General Post Office.⁵⁷ (Pl. 33)

The same Georgian spirit prevailed in the Hôtel-de-France but here, the inspiration came more directly from England. Built on St-Gabriel Street, in front of the Champ-de-Mars, it was pulled down some 10 years ago. We may tentatively date it back to the early nineteenth century for it appears on a "Vue du Champ-de-Mars", an 1830 engraving by Sproule. It was rather heavy-looking and showed influences of the Georgian square plan with hipped roof and a central staircase. (Pl. 32)

The case of the Old Customs House is more interesting. Today it houses government offices. First of all, its location in the middle of the old Place du Marché is symbolic of a change in the values prevailing at the time. Under the old regime, only the parish church could have claimed the right to such a location. Now, it was the Customs' turn... a clear reflection of the merchants' growing importance in the

city's life. Designed in 1833 by John Ostell, it was still a rather small building, 60 by 70 feet, with two storeys only.

John Ostell was, together with Victor Bourgeau, the most prominent architect of nineteenth century Montreal. He was born in 1813, in London, and he probably undertook some kind of studies in architecture, engineering and surveying before coming to Montreal where he settled around 1833, apparently remaining there until his death in 1892. Ostell was never short of work in his town of adoption. In addition to the Customs House he is responsible for the towers of the Church of Notre-Dame, the Façade of the remarkable Church of the Visitation, at Sault-au-Récollet, the Church of Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, the Grand Séminaire on Sherbrooke Street, the Archbishop's Palace, destroyed by fire in 1852, the re-building of St. James Church after it was levelled by the same fire, and, finally, the Asile de la Providence. He has also been credited with a number of other designs, including the Church of St. Ann, in Pointe-St-Charles, which has been recently pulled down; a few buildings adjoining McGill University as well as the general planning of the campus itself and, finally, the plan for the Côte-des-Neiges cemetery. With his nephew, Maurice Perreault, Ostell set up what was to become the oldest firm of architects in the country. Together they designed the Old Court House on Notre-Dame Street, to which we shall return later. If we

compare this building with the heavy gothic style of what remains of his work in the Church of St. James, it seems that John Ostell was more successful with the classical orders than with any other style.⁵⁸ The Customs House was his very first work in America; it was moreover built within surroundings where the vernacular architecture was predominant. Ostell seems therefore to have reached by indulging in a fullscale display of his skill in the field of classical architecture. Even though few people realize this at first, much to the credit of the architect, this small construction displays almost the whole gamut of the characteristic features of classicism: Tuscan pilasters, triangular frontons and arched windows on the side overlooking St. Paul Street; free-stone course with strongly marked joints, lovely porches with Tuscan columns and entablatures crowning the openings overlooking Commissioners Street; Venetian or Palladian windows on the other façades, etc. ... We need not emphasize the British influence evidenced here in every detail; it is specially apparent in the Venetian windows and triangular frontons; the latter, which were Palladio's favorite devices to enhance the main entrances, had been adopted by the English followers of the classics. At a closer look, we find the small Customs Building rather overcrowded with architectural details but there is little doubt that it answered the Montreal merchants' quest for a symbol of their

growing importance in the community. (Fig. 10)

The merchants were not alone in their determination to see their rights and pretensions acknowledged. The official Anglican Church was indeed quite eager to assert its presence by way of a symbolic building, all the more so since it had to take root in a predominantly Catholic town.

For Anglican Montrealers, it was therefore a matter of rivalling the old Church of Notre-Dame. This may be the reason why they chose to build their temple on a nearby lot on the northern side of Notre-Dame Street and halfway between Place d'Armes and St. Lawrence Street. As for the building itself, after several architects had submitted their plans, they eventually selected those of William Berczy, a German traveller and sometime painter and amateur architect. Thus, on June 21, 1805, the first stone was laid by the Anglican Bishop of Quebec. Originally, the building was to accommodate some 800 people at a cost of some £7,500. Construction however, was considerably delayed for lack of funds and the building's capacity was subsequently enlarged to meet the increase in the protestant population of Montreal. The church eventually cost far more than expected and was not completed until 1821.⁵⁹ (Fig. 6)

Silliman liked the church and he did not hesitate to call it the most beautiful building in Montreal.⁶⁰

Talbot was also very much impressed with the steeple, "reconnu pour être supérieur à tout ce qu'on voit en ce genre dans le nord de l'Amérique-Anglaise", and which he found very slender and elegant. The inside of the church, in his opinion, attested to the taste and refinement of its designers.⁶¹ Joseph Bouchette, in his 1831 description of the British Dominion of North America, wrote that he regarded the church as one of the most splendid specimens of modern architecture in the province.⁶²

Actually, and notwithstanding what Bouchette had to say, the first Anglican cathedral in Montreal had nothing modern whatsoever. Its models, the magnificent churches of Christopher Wren and James Gibbs, had been in existence in London for over a century. It is hardly surprising, for like the Anglican Cathedral of Quebec with which it had much in common both in spirit and in forms, it was meant to reflect the consciousness of a self-confident church and the virtues of a society faithful to its traditions and code of ethics. And what could be better than a society which had restored the Anglican Church and monarchy? And since Wren had been the first architect to adapt the temple to the new Anglican liturgy, his architectural designs rested on solid grounds.

The design of Christ Church with its rectangular plan and extension to accommodate the altar⁶³, resembled the design for St. Bride on Fleet Street and St. James on Piccadilly

in London. Its inside volume was divided into three sections: a central nave with a semi-circular arched ceiling resting on an uninterrupted entablature, itself supported by Corinthian columns; one lateral nave on each side, with typical flat ceilings and galleries also supported by columns. In brief, a good illustration of Wren's principles for "a convenient auditory in which everyone should hear the service and both hear and see the preacher..."⁶⁴. Incidentally, these galleries were an innovation devised by Wren for his churches and later perpetuated by Gibbs in his own designs.

With its main façade and its three doors corresponding to the three inside naves, the Anglican Cathedral of Montreal resembled more the Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields by Gibbs. From the outside, the latter is conspicuous for its unique combination of a classical porch and a soaring almost medieval steeple. Christ Church had, strictly speaking no porch as such, but gave the illusion of a porch. Its main feature was certainly its steeple, set in the very same way as its counterpart in St. Martin-in-the-Fields, though not quite so elaborate. It consisted of a square tower built of stone and brick, topped by a wooden bell-tower covered with tin, with its pinnacle rising to a height of 204 feet.

More classical in style than the Anglican Cathedral of Quebec, thanks mainly to a parapet crowning the building

and emphasizing the horizontal volume, Christ Church, as a monument, was intended to symbolize self-confidence. However, considering the site where it was erected, it probably did not convey a very comfortable feeling. In this respect, the Anglican Cathedral of Quebec and the old Customs House in Montreal were erected on lots which were in keeping with their message. Christ Church, symbol of the stereotyped values of an idealized society, should have been cleared on all sides, like a funeral monument standing in a churchyard. This purpose was to be achieved half a century later when the second Christ Church Cathedral was erected on St. Catherine Street, in lieu of one which had been entirely destroyed by fire in December 1856.

The latter had nevertheless provided Montreal with an important landmark. Its steeple was right there competing for sky and heaven with the steeple and the old Church of Notre-Dame. The two sanctuaries, built almost side by side, reaffirmed the existence of two communities divided at the ethnical as well as at the religious level. Christ Church was a challenge to the French-speaking Catholic community, and even more so to the Sulpicians of the Old Seminary, who were in charge of the parish of Notre-Dame and seigneurs of the place. Already roused by the construction, against their will, of St. James Church, in Faubourg St-Laurent, which was to

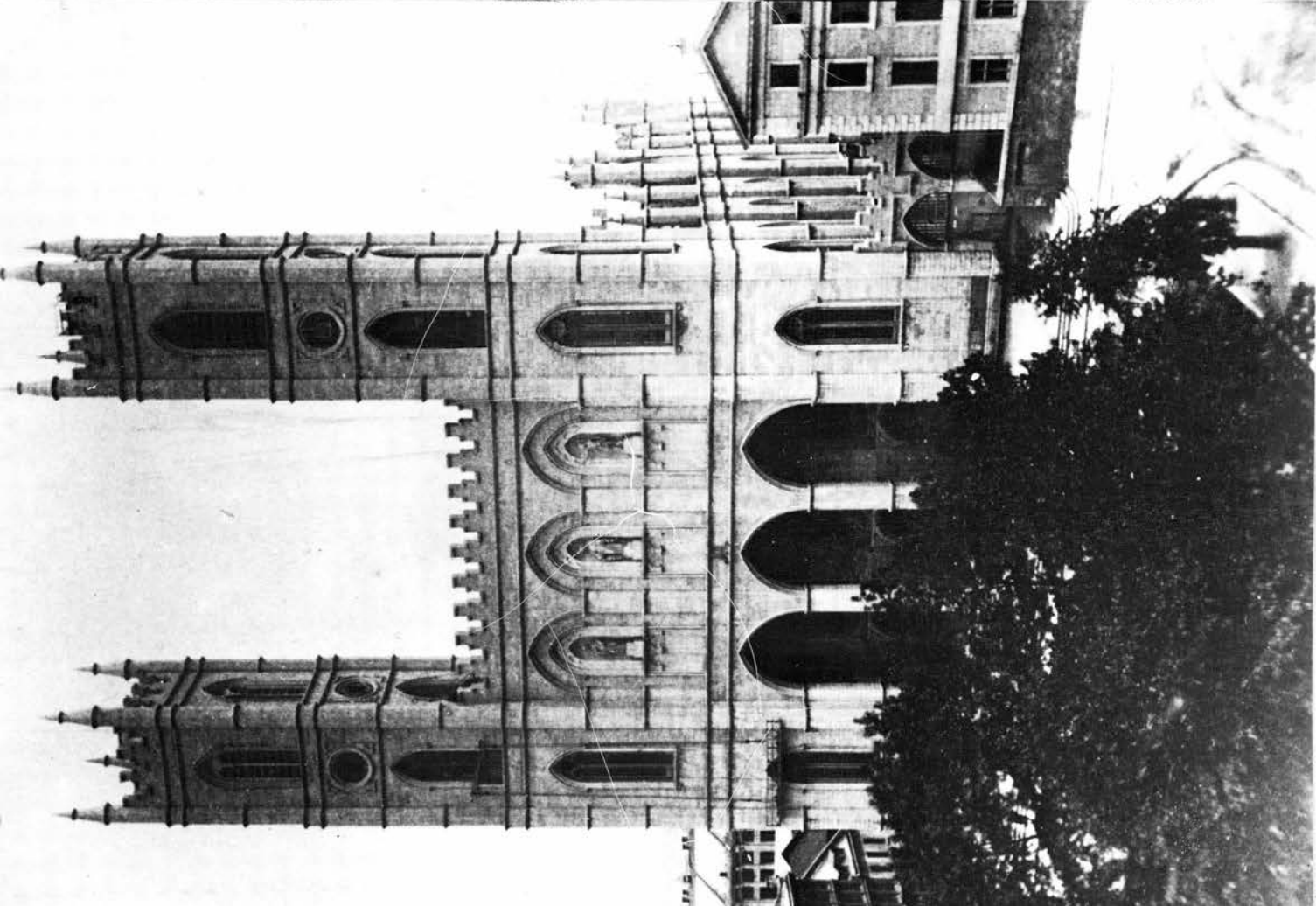
become the first Catholic Cathedral in Montreal, they met the challenge in the most unexpected way: they built the new Church of Notre-Dame.

4. The New Church of Notre-Dame

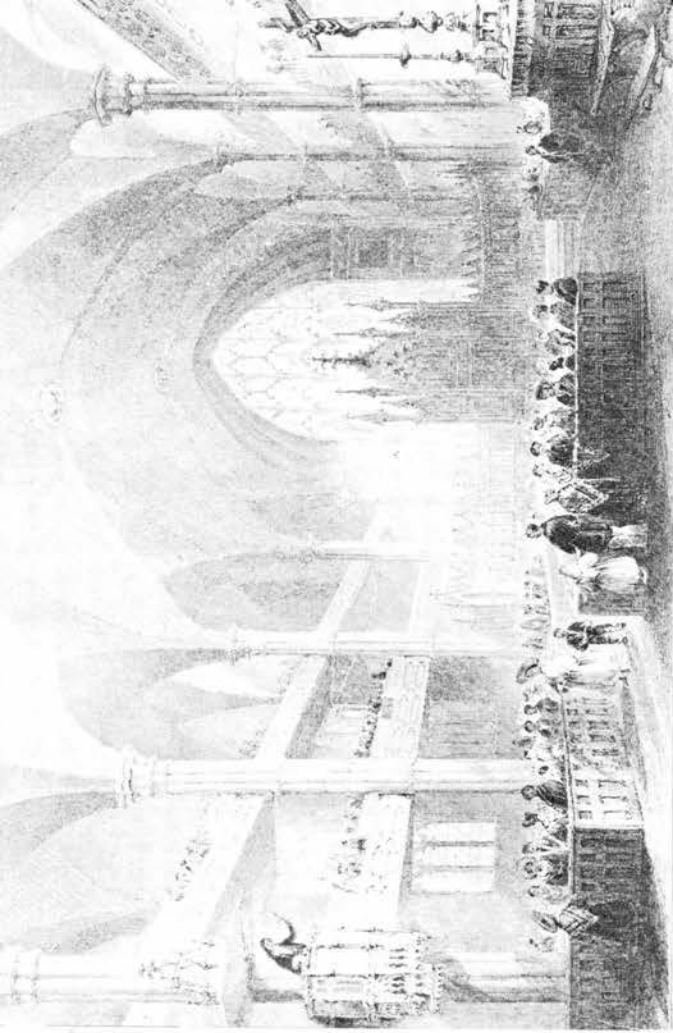
The present Church of Notre-Dame is too familiar a sight to bear description here. It is so much a part of our city's image that it is impossible today to imagine Place d'Armes without this huge neo-gothic monument. On the other hand, when one is overly familiar with a building, one tends to forget its main features, whether it be qualities or defects. Who, for example, is aware today of the monumental scale of this church, especially since it has been completely dwarfed by the presence of nearby high-rises? We have to remind ourselves that its towers are 217 feet high and its structures about 255 feet long by 135 feet wide; measured under the vault, the nave is some 80 feet high. At the time it was built (1824-1829), it was the largest building in both Canadas and perhaps in all of North America. Of course, any comparison with the great gothic cathedrals of Europe would be futile. However, as bad habits prevail, its porch has been compared to that of the Cathedral of Peterborough, its towers to those of Westminster Abbey and its façade, as incredible as it may seem, to that of Notre-Dame in Paris. True, its vault is as high as that of the Cathedral of Peterborough; its towers are

almost as high as those of Westminster and they fall short of equalling those of Notre-Dame in Paris by only two and a half feet. While the new Notre-Dame is not as long as the last two churches mentioned, it is wider than the former and almost as wide as the latter. (Pl. 26)

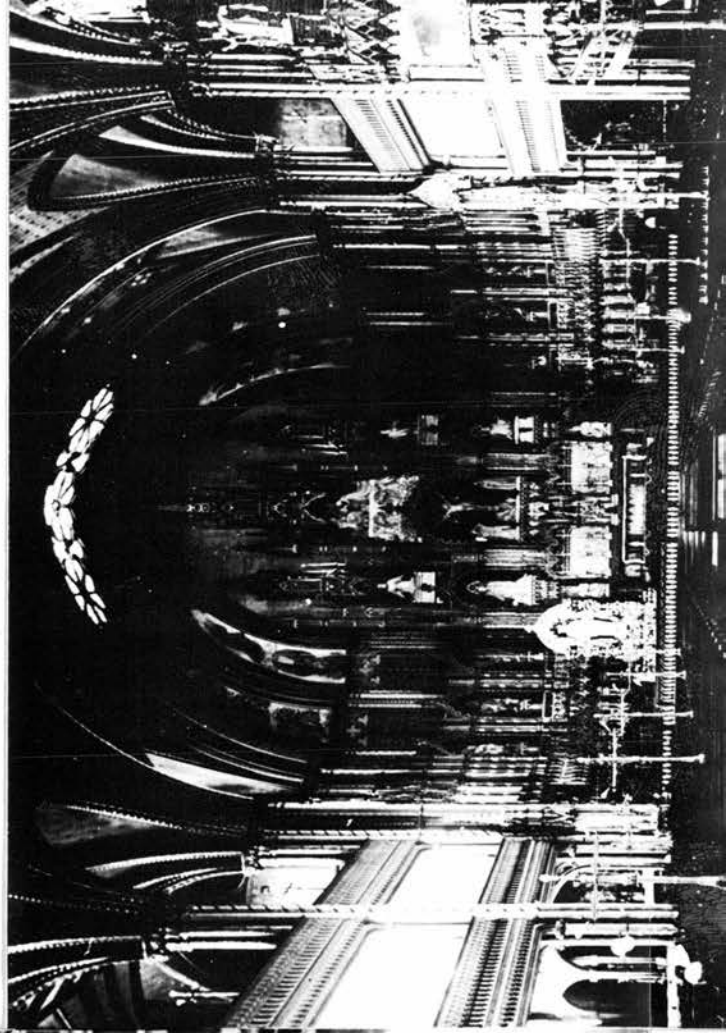
Comparisons of this kind are superficial but they are the only ones we can safely make. A comparison from a strictly architectural point of view between Notre-Dame in Montreal and the gothic masterpieces of the Middle Ages would only highlight the absurdity of Montreal's achievement. The authentic gothic style was primarily a dynamic construction system contrived to balance the thrust of the vaults through devices such as crossing ogives, flying buttresses and counter-ports. This allowed the walls to be hollowed out and adequate lighting to be dispensed inside large structures. Our church is obviously only a caricature of such style. Indeed, its vault is a mere ceiling hanging from the roof. Its structural principle remains essentially the traditional box which prevailed in the classical English churches of the late seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, built by Sir Christopher Wren and James Gibbs, and including inside galleries. In the nave, instead of the brightness and sallies offered by an authentic gothic approach, there was, originally, but gloom and obscurity. This reflects the almost unanimous opinion of



26. Notre-Dame Church, Place d'Armes, around 1870.
James O'Donnell; arch., 1824-29.



27. Interior of Notre-Dame Church, as it looked
around 1838. Drawing by William Henry Bartlett.



28. The present interior of Notre-Dame Church, after
alterations by architect V. Bourgeau around 1870.

contemporary observers. The present interior is, indeed, very different from the original design. It was transformed in the 1870's by Victor Bourgeau, a Canadian architect. The large stained glass window rising, as in Yorkminster, at the apsis of the church, dispensed a very harsh light to the choir but hardly any light elsewhere; it was therefore pulled down. Instead, three rosewindows were cut out through the roof, in an attempt to provide the main nave with adequate lighting. Similarly, the initial grey-blue marble imitation limewash was removed and replaced by polychrome paintings similar to those decorating La Sainte Chapelle in Paris, and the fortress-cathedral in Albi. The complete renovation of the high altar is another alteration completed around the end of the last century. (Pl. 27 & 28)

On the other hand, Notre-Dame is a pioneer achievement of gothic revival in North America. It is certainly the only example of such monumental proportions. When they used gothic components in a decorative rather than in a structural way, the architects involved in that movement were trying, at first, to recapture the "atmosphere" of that style rather than the logic of its construction. In this light, Notre-Dame assumes a much more significant place in the history of Canadian and Montreal's architecture than is generally acknowledged. As a matter of fact, the architect, James O'Donnell did not try to

re-create a gothic monument, nor did he draw his inspiration from the genuine sources of gothic art in Europe. He seems to have drawn from his reminiscences of monuments seen in his native Ireland or in England, a country with which he was well acquainted. According to Franklin Toker, his direct sources of inspiration were his own achievements in the United States of America, like Christ Church in New York (1823) and the first Presbyterian Church in Rochester (1824), where he had resorted to the use of certain gothic features. He also borrowed from the contemporary work of American architects such as the First Unitarian Church (1817-1818) by Maximilian Godefroy in Baltimore, Christ Church (1816) by Charles Bullfinch in Lancaster, Massachusetts, and the Church of St-Paul (1817-1818) by Benjamin Henry LaTrobe, in Alexandria, Virginia.⁶⁵

Observations and reactions to Notre-Dame by contemporaries enable us to understand that they were not looking for gothic architecture as such; rather, they were seeking the image for which the gothic style had always stood: a symbol of faith, dignity and beauty that not even the very real defects of this church have managed to blur. Theodore Pavie, whom we have already acknowledged as a sensitive observer, wrote in 1830, that Notre-Dame was a "vaste et beau monument", the most remarkable he had ever seen in all of America.⁶⁶ Coke, in "A Subaltern's Furlough", an excellent

work published in 1833, was even more emphatic when he claimed that the Catholic Cathedral (sic) of Notre-Dame was probably superior to any other monument of its kind in North America and even to any other structure of the nineteenth century ... Strangely enough, his short description of the cathedral is mainly concerned with its weaknesses and with some details of poor taste.⁶⁷ A few years later, a Scotsman, Hugh Murray, was to react in a similar way. He felt a strong dislike for the large stained glass window but this did not prevent him from appreciating the style and the surprising dimensions of the church. He thought that its altar resembled the altar of St. Peter in Rome, its pulpit, the pulpit of the Cathedral of Strasbourg and he concluded that "the new Catholic Cathedral ... is undoubtedly the most splendid, and is, in fact, superior to any other in British America"⁶⁸. Walter Henry's reaction is also typical. He was a seasoned traveller who spent a whole year in Montreal. He readily acknowledged Notre-Dame as the most majestic church on the continent and a dignified monument but he did not have a kind word for its inside decoration; he found it poor and an example of bad taste. He was most impressed by the vast dimensions, the lamps that never ceased burning, the sumptuous altar, the madonnas on the walls and the constant presence of kneeling penitents...⁶⁹

Considering such evidence, it becomes obvious

that the criteria for assessing architecture had lost a great deal of sophistication since the classical period. Notre-Dame, for instance, was not as much appreciated for its intrinsic architectural qualities as for the sentimental emotion derived from its stunning dimensions and other striking features, or for the "message" conveyed by its style or by its other functions. We were now entering the Romantic era and Notre-Dame was gradually becoming a symbol. O'Donnell, its architect, addressing the members of the Church Construction Committee wrote: "Messieurs, ayez bien dans l'esprit que vous n'élevez pas une construction temporaire, mais plutôt que vous érigez un édifice qui jettera de la gloire sur vous, que votre assemblée et votre pays ... je vous assure que l'histoire de votre Eglise sera transmise aux générations futures".⁷⁰

James O'Donnell himself was a romantic artist, as may be gathered from biographical notes by Maurault and by Toker. Born in Ireland, in 1774, he studied architecture and completed his studies by travelling to some European countries. He never set foot in France, however. He emigrated to the United States of America in 1812, without having achieved anything remarkable in his own field of art. Once settled in New York, he does not appear to have emerged in any outstanding way except that he produced plans for a dozen buildings including restorations and additions to Columbia College and

to the two neo-gothic churches already mentioned. He was also the only architect to have been elected, as a member of the American Academy of Fine Arts in New York, a distinction in which he took great pride. A confirmed individualist, he attached the utmost importance to his status as a professional; he was ostentatiously conscientious and ticklish in matters involving "his honour".⁷¹ He seemed unable to conceal his boredom and impatience when confronted with unintelligent laymen or with opinions contrary to his own. A letter he wrote to François Antoine La Rocque, a member of the Church Construction Committee, and reproduced in the Appendix to Franklin Toker's⁷² excellent book, is very revealing in this respect. Some time later he complained: "hélas! combien peu de gens, ici, apprécient l'oeuvre d'un architecte!..." This sounds like the echo of many a Romantic complaint.⁷³

On the other hand, James O'Donnell had every right to claim credit for his work in Montreal. Toker reminds us that he had been called upon to design a church three or four times larger than any other church on the continent. He was asked to build it on a prestigious but somehow awkward location and to do so in a new style that would challenge entrenched traditions.⁷⁴ As for the construction itself, he was very successful: he completed this considerable work in five seasons only, thus demonstrating his skill as an engineer,

especially in the structural devices provided for the roof. Considering the site chosen, O'Donnell had grand ideas, and his porch with three monumental arches proves that his church was designed to be viewed from as far away as Sherbrooke Terrace. If Place d'Armes had been extended down to Craig Street, as advocated in the plan approved in 1801 by the Commissioners and as intended by O'Donnell himself, the scenery we would enjoy today would be much more in keeping with the monument's scale than the view we now manage to get from Place d'Armes. From an architectural point of view, he was more successful with the exterior of the church, which does not lack vigour, than with the interior; the latter seems to have disappointed everybody... We cannot, however, accept at face value all the opinions voiced on this subject, including the following statements by J.E. Alexander: ... "its tawdry internal decorations, its blue compartments and spotted pillars, caused the death of the unfortunate architect, who died of a broken heart, disgusted at the bad taste which had spoiled his handiwork."⁷⁵ O'Donnell accepted poor working conditions and lower salary out of dedication to his work, but it eventually impaired his health: he must have truly believed in the importance of his venture. An artist seldom cares for his work to the point of asking to be buried close by after his death. It was perhaps with this thought in mind, since he had already expressed the

wish before, that O'Donnell renounced the Protestant faith to become a Catholic. This was some time before his death which occurred on January 28, 1830. His wish was granted: he lay buried under his church, at the foot of the first pillar, on the right hand side.

The Gothic Revival came into fashion in England around 1750-1770, that is at the time Robert Adam and his followers completed the renovation of Strawberry Hill, the residence of Horace Walpole. The new style had certainly reached its climax as early as the beginning of the nineteenth century, for the delightful Church of St. Luke, in Chelsea, London, designed in 1820 by James Savage, gives ample proof of its perfection. In America, however, the new trend was still in its infancy at the time. In the United States of America, examples can be counted on the fingers of one hand. To the already mentioned buildings designed by Godefroy, Bullfinch, LaTrobe and O'Donnell, we must add St. Mary's Seminar, in Baltimore, designed in 1817 after the Gothic fashion. However, the most famous examples of the style, such as Trinity Church in New York (1841-1846) by Richard Upjohn, were to be completed much later. In Upper and Lower Canada, the new fashion made its first appearance in the Maritime Provinces, in the early nineteenth century. At that time, it amounted to a few gothic devices grafted onto Georgian or neo-classical wooden buildings.

One may therefore imagine the tremendous impact of a monument of the size and importance of Notre-Dame in Montreal, entirely built in the neo-gothic style, all the more so since that church was closely identified with the established values propounded by the clerical order and warranted by its prestige. Notre-Dame launched the fashion and neo-gothic became the only proper style for places of worship. Gothic became synonymous with Christianity, as if one could better pray in a church decorated with ogival arches and crowned with pinnacles. Carried away by this example, many parish priests throughout the province would not hesitate to "gothicize" some delightful churches built in the vernacular style, sometimes pulling down what had been a delicate masterpiece to replace it by some gothic elephant. The bells of Notre-Dame were now tolling for the old French architectural tradition in Quebec.

A few alert people, such as Abbé Jérôme Demers and Thomas Baillargé, who had been preaching the gospel of classicism throughout the province, were quick to realize that the style of Notre-Dame was about to deal a mortal blow to the classical tradition. Baillargé even submitted an alternative plan: presumably a cruciform church of classical inspiration. But their opposition carried little weight: times had already moved ahead. O'Donnell simply answered that the gothic style seemed to him "more suitable to your materials, workmen,

climate, wants and means, etc."⁷⁶ This meant nothing except, perhaps, that the idea had made its way. From now on, the gothic style was going to be an acceptable alternative to classicism, even in the eye of the layman. When Thomas Bail-
 largé who, by now, was a recognized architect, was approached by the churchwardens of Montreal to take into his hands the construction of the future cathedral, he answered to the point in a letter: "Votre bâtisse devant être gothique et n'ayant étudié que l'architecture grecque et romaine, ce que j'ai cru suffisant pour le pays, je n'ai pris qu'une connaissance superficielle du gothique et je me crois donc de ce côté au-dessous de cette tâche..."⁷⁷.

He was not the only one to feel unequal to the task of building the new Notre-Dame. According to O'Donnell, all the workers on the site were in the same predicament: they are "universally careless, and inattentive in obeying orders"⁷⁸. What was mainly lacking, he complained, was a "system", forgetting that a "system" as such, was foreign to Quebec craftsmen's tradition. Indeed, in the eye of the latter, conception was rarely dissociated from execution. A man like Thomas Bail-
 largé, though conceived, drafted and built his own plans. And now, for the first time in Montreal, a professional architect had appeared on the scene to deal with a large project. He was bringing in a new style, borrowed from the English

tradition. He was imposing a monumental scale to which the Quebec workers were not accustomed. He used materials that had to be assembled in a new way, and imposed working techniques which would deny the craftsman any autonomy or creative ability as he was forced to complete steps ordered from above by a total stranger. The industrial era was dawning.

The second part of our study on the development of Montreal started with the vision of the first church of Notre-Dame, proudly standing as a beacon in the heart of the small town. It ends with the vision of a church which steadily holds the same position. But not for long... for a new era was about to be born. Tremendous changes were in the offing for Montreal, as the city was about to experience unprecedented topographical growth. The New World was to extend vertically and horizontally all at once, with railways and high-rises as its symbols. The merchant and the industrialist were to triumph over the "seignor" and the "craftsman", as we shall see in the third part of this study.

PART III

VICTORIAN MONTREAL

(c. 1840 - c. the First World War)

Les rues y sont larges et bien mieux entretenues qu'à Québec; les magasins vastes et superbement bornés, les institutions de crédit abondent, et quelques-unes des banques principales - situées pour la plupart dans la rue Saint-Jacques - sont installées dans de véritables palais. Les journaux anglais et français écrasent par l'ampleur de leur format et l'abondance des renseignements leurs plus modestes confrères de Québec; les maisons particulières elles-mêmes affectent les prétentions architecturales des plus grandes cités du continent américain. Vingt sectes diverses ont édifié des églises, dont un bon nombre, avouons-le, sont bâties dans ce style hybride et désagréable, semi-gothique et semi-rocaille, qui fait la joie des cockneys anglo-saxons et le désespoir des véritables artistes. Dans cette débauche de bâtisses religieuses, le clergé catholique tenait à ne pas se laisser distancer. Non content de posséder une cathédrale qui passe cependant pour l'une des plus belles d'Amérique du Nord, l'évêque de Montréal a entrepris, à grand renfort de souscriptions, d'ériger une basilique nouvelle qui sera la réduction, mais une réduction grandiose encore, du premier des temples chrétiens: Saint-Pierre de Rome aura sa copie sur les bords du Saint-Laurent. H. de Lamothe, 1879.¹

CHAPTER SEVEN

NEW FORCES

It is revolution that has done most to change the places where men live, not the revolution of politics but the revolution of economics and technics...

Henry S. Churchill.²

1. The Transportation Revolution

Queen Victoria ascended the throne of England in 1837 and reigned for 64 long years until her death in 1901. Her reign witnessed a great many discoveries, inventions, and technical and scientific developments which marked the beginning of the industrial revolution and turned England into the first and most powerful industrial nation in the world. As far as the evolution of Montreal is concerned, her reign might have been less noteworthy had it not also witnessed the impact of the economic and technical revolution on architecture and on the urban environment.

One of the first achievements of technology in the colony was the launching in 1809 of the Accommodation which was the first steamboat to navigate the St. Lawrence River and which had been completely built and fitted in Montreal. The use of steam to propel a ship had shortened distances and proved that commercial navigation on the St. Lawrence was both possible and economically feasible, a fact which sail navigation

had not established. This was to stimulate the launching of huge projects to improve the great waterway. Thus, in 1825, the Lachine Canal was opened and was further transformed and enlarged in 1836-37 and again in 1844. The Lachine Rapids were thus no longer an obstacle. As early as 1848, a network of canals as well as dredging of the bottom of the river enabled ships to be navigated on the river, from the Atlantic Ocean to the Great Lakes. The first ocean steamer to sail up the St. Lawrence, the SS Genova, docked triumphantly at Montreal harbour in May 1853.³ (Pl. 36)

Montreal, with its privileged geographical location, was to benefit significantly from steam navigation. This is evident from the spectacular development of port installations. At the turn of the century, the few ships which ventured their way through the St. Mary's currents had but a muddy beach at the foot of the Market Place along which to lower the anchor. Here is what John Lambert had to say about this "natural" harbour in 1807:

The shipping lie close to the shore, which is very steep, and forms a kind of natural wharf, upon which the vessels discharge their cargoes. About twenty yards back, the land rises to the height of 15 or 20 feet; and an artificial wharf has been constructed, and faced with plank; the goods are, however, all shipped from, and landed upon, the beach below.⁴

However, this state of affairs was soon to improve. Between 1832 and 1838 the average number of arrivals was 100 ships for an overall tonnage of 23,137 tons. In 1842, there was scarcely one mile of stone piers. In 1850, there were two miles of piers and both arrivals and tonnage had doubled to 222 ships and 46,000 tons respectively. A short ten years later, tonnage rose to 261,000 tons for ocean-going vessels and 530,000 tons for river-boats. In 1877, colonization expanded into the western territories, now politically unified under confederation. This expansion was reflected in the progress and development of Montreal Harbour. Its piers and jetties by now extended from the entrance of the Lachine Canal to the eastern limits of the city up to the level of Frontenac Street. There were over four miles of installations and tonnage has reached the million and a half mark. Montreal is a transit centre between ocean-going vessels and river-boats and is the most important Canadian trading centre between the Old and New World.

Towards the end of the century, Montreal Harbour, while operating for only seven months of the year, received about one thousand ocean-going vessels a year. It was by then the second most important port in America after New York, surpassing both Boston and Philadelphia, on the Atlantic seaboard. In 1914, the tonnage reached nine million tons. During the

first years of the twentieth century, important changes were made to the port facilities in order to store western wheat. The huge grain elevators which today partially hide the outline of the city date back to that era and are as characteristic of the industrial era as the large factories and the first sky-scrapers.⁵

The use of steam to power rail transport was to constitute the greatest event marking the Victorian era and, as an achievement, it would be even more significant than steam navigation. Together with the improvement of the navigable channels of the St. Lawrence River and of the port facilities, the railway would prove to be the most precious ally of the metropolis in its quest for a national destiny. Indeed, the railroad was able to reach areas not accessible by boat and, unlike the rivers which freeze, it was not susceptible to the rigours of winter. In 1836, a mere six years after history's first railroad linked the cities of Liverpool and Manchester in England, the colony inaugurated its first railroad which was also the first railroad in all the British colonies. It was named the Champlain and St. Lawrence, and it linked St-Jean on the Richelieu River to Laprairie; it was meant to facilitate communications between Montreal and New York. A second railroad, inaugurated in November 1847 linked Lachine to Montreal and complemented Lachine Canal. In 1853

a connection with the Grand Trunk line linked Montreal to Portland, on the coast of Maine, and gave Montreal its first link with an ice-free port. The same company would, some years later (1855-56), lay the tracks for a rail link between Toronto and Montreal. Around the same time, the construction of the first bridge over the St. Lawrence River was planned and was eventually completed within the framework of the Grand Trunk project. The bridge, to which we shall return in a later chapter, would be called Victoria Bridge, a symbolic name for the era. In 1876 the Intercolonial Railway would link Montreal to the Maritime provinces and a decade later, in May 1887, the first transcontinental railway, the Canadian Pacific Railway, would extend the line from Montreal to Vancouver. With the advent of the Canadian Pacific, two monumental railway stations were erected in the metropolis: Viger and Windsor. They became the railway's architectural symbol and Montreal became the turntable of Canada's entire railway network. Once more, the city resumed its role as a link between the East and the West.

Although less spectacular than the transcontinental railway network, the secondary network of railway lines was equally important to Montreal's economy. Looking like a spider web, the network's lines spread out in every direction to points like Quebec City, Joliette, St-Jérôme, Hull,

Valleyfield, and other localities, as well as to national and intercontinental connecting points. This network functioned both in winter and in summer and thus complemented the river network.⁶

The revolution in the means as well as in the equipment of land and sea transportation, together with other influences like natural, human and financial resources, became a determining factor in the rapid industrialization which was to mark the development of Montreal in the second half of the nineteenth century. Without Montreal's port facilities and without the railways, industry would certainly not have progressed to the point of becoming the city's most important field of economic activity from 1870 onwards. While coal and steel were the catalysts of economic development, both materials were lacking in the Montreal region and were thus brought in by boat and rail. The same carriers brought other raw materials to Montreal. Grain became an important commodity: large amounts of it were stocked in the huge silos on the harbour for later export. Some grain was processed on the spot, in breweries and distilleries, in the Ogilvy Mills on the pier of Pointe-au-Moulin-à-Vent and at the St. Lawrence Flour Mills established in 1910 near Lachine Canal. Cane sugar was transported to Montreal to be refined at the John Redpath Plant and at the St. Lawrence Sugar Plant in Hochelaga. Later, oil

refineries would occupy a considerable amount of space on the island's east end. The new industries generated many new jobs and hundreds of men were now employed in the shipping and handling of raw materials. Design, construction, and maintenance of the new means of transportation became a growing industrial sector of the economy. Thus, thousands of workers were now working at various shipyards and steel plants manufacturing steam engines and rolling stock. There were numerous factories located near the harbour and Lachine Canal: Canadian Car and Foundry with workshops in St-Henri, La Salle, Pointe St-Charles, and Longue-Pointe; Montreal Locomotive Work in Longue-Pointe; Canadian Vickers and the Angus Shops in Maisonneuve; etc. Their employees were also numerous: thus, in 1880, the repair yard of the Grand Trunk Railway in Pointe St-Charles employed some 3,000 people, while the large Angus workshop of Canadian Pacific, which built and maintained the rolling stock, employed some 7,000 workers towards the end of the century.⁷

In order to understand the other aspects of Montreal's industrialization we must now turn our attention to the human element involved in this process.

2. Two Solitudes

The revolution in the means of communications and inter-city transportation - steamboats, railways, soon followed by the telegraph - generated a centrepetal force

which resulted in a concentration of most of the Dominion's economic activities in Montreal. This concentration of economic, financial, commercial and industrial activities turned the city into a powerful centre of attraction towards which thousands of immigrants converged sometimes in search of instant fortunes but more often in search of their daily bread. The new sources of energy as well as technological progress created a need for the division and interdependence of labour, which in turn forced the concentration of manpower and production. In turn, the increasing concentration of population in the city stimulated the growth of industry, trade and services which resulted in an increase in both consumption and manpower. Thus the process of urbanization, which until then had been rather slow, suddenly accelerated. For the first time since the second half of the nineteenth century, the ratio between the urban and rural population and between grouped and scattered dwellings had been upset. In 1825 Montreal and Quebec, which were British America's most important urban centres, comprised only 5% of the territory's population; in 1851, for the province of Quebec alone, the percentage of urban population had arisen to 14.9. In 1881, the percentage rose to 23.8. The steepest increase occurred at the beginning of the twentieth century: 36.1% in 1901, 44.5% ten years later. In 1921, the percentage of urban dwellers had doubled over the last forty

years to 51.8%.⁸

In less than a century the process of urban growth completely upset the balance between rural and urban populations and Montreal became the first point of agglomeration as well as the most dynamic and most insatiable city, not only in the province of Quebec but also in all of British North America. As transportation improved and production was rationalized and mechanized, the process of population growth accelerated. In the seventy years following the British conquest, from 1761 to 1831, Montreal's population grew by 21,797 which is not surprising considering the natural demographic process and the influx of British as well as Loyalist immigrants. In the next seventy years, however, from 1831 to 1901, the population rose by more than 300,000 individuals, a figure which cannot be accounted for by the normal demographic processes and which is more consistent with a large scale immigration.⁹

Who were these immigrants and where did they come from? Many came from the British Isles in three main waves: the first wave, composed mainly of soldiers who had been discharged after the Napoleonic wars, reached its peak around 1819; an economic crises in Europe in the 1830's set off a second wave, and Irish immigrants fleeing the famines of the 1840's made up most of the third wave. It is not known

exactly how many immigrants landed and stayed here, for Montreal was both a national harbour and a point of entry into America and as such ass a transfer centre for people arriving on the continent and many immigrants went on to Upper Canada or to the United States. Even without the availability of information, it is obvious that British immigration made a significant contribution to the land, both from the point of view of the numbers and the quality of immigrants. Indeed, the British brought with them technology as well as capital at a time when the United Kingdom had gained an enviable position in the fields of science and technology. The wealthiest, most astute and most daring among them - Scots, most of them - soon gained control over the means of production and began to fully exploit the new means of transport and communications and to control finances.¹⁰

Many worthy men followed in the footsteps of McGill and McTavish. The names of a few Montreal families that acquired large fortunes in the second half of the nineteenth century illustrate this fact. John Redpath had been very successful as head foreman during the construction of Notre-Dame Church and as contractor for Victoria Bridge; at fifty years of age he ventured into sugar refining and was even more successful. McGill University owes its most beautiful buildings to the generosity of the Redpath family. The

Ogilvies were farmers on Côte St-Michel who became the most enterprising corn merchants in the country. McGill University also benefited from the generosity of another man, Sir William MacMonald, who was somewhat of an eccentric and who made millions in the tobacco industry while openly deploring the use of tobacco. Hugh Allan founded the Montreal Ocean Steamship Company in 1852 and later the Canadian Pacific Railway Company; he left a personal fortune assessed at six to eight million dollars - an astronomical figure for the time - and his old residence of Ravenscray on Pine Avenue bears witness to his wealth.¹¹ The importance of Scottish immigrants in Montreal is best shown by a visit to the Protestant cemetery on Mount Royal, where their tombstones surpass all others in number as well as in opulence.

British immigrants, however, were not all qualified, audacious, or destined to great fortunes. Most of them were poor, starving people coming from Ireland. Between 1845 and 1848 about one hundred thousand Irish immigrants came to Canada to escape the great famine of 1845-46. So many of them settled in Montreal that the Cheneville Street neighbourhood was nicknamed "Little Dublin" and the old Griffintown District was almost exclusively settled by the Irish. The large population increase (56%) in Montreal between 1851 and 1861 probably reflects this massive Irish immigration. Many of them managed

to survive as construction workers for the canals or for Victoria Bridge or as labourers at the shipyards of Lachine Canal.

The city's census of 1851 clearly reflects the larger proportion of British amongst immigrants from foreign countries. Indeed, of some 57,715 inhabitants living in the city at the time, hardly two-thirds (38,514) were born in Canada, whether of French or other origin. Of the 19,201 remaining, 11,736 were born in Ireland, 3,150 in Scotland, 2,858 in England 919 in the United States, a mere 133 in France and 405 in other countries.¹² In time, though, the preponderance of British settlers would diminish in favour of a more varied immigration which would herald the multiracial and cosmopolitan vocation of twentieth century Montreal. Thus Russian Jews - 6000 of them in Montreal in 1900 - Syrians, Italians, Chinese, etc., came to settle in Montreal. Gradually they developed strong communities, often settling in specific districts as exemplified by the Chinese district (Chinatown).¹³

Overseas immigration alone cannot account for the remarkable growth of population in Montreal in those days. Foreign immigration was in fact doubled by strong local migrations of French Canadian country dwellers attracted by the city. In spite of a lack of precise figures one may nevertheless assume that local migrations towards the city surpassed

all other types of immigrations. This would explain why the great rural plain of Montreal counted fewer inhabitants in 1931 than in 1861, and why the city, which was mostly populated by people of British origin in 1840 regained a French majority from 1870 onwards even though immigration from France for the whole period between 1861 and 1931 numbered a mere four to five thousand individuals.¹⁴ As Cooper pointed out, the French Canadians, namely Rivard, Beaudry, Beaugrand, Grenier, Desjardins, Villeneuve and Préfontaine who were mayors of Montreal between 1879 and 1902 were all born outside the city.¹⁵

The migration to the city of a large number of French Canadian country dwellers accounts for the soaring growth as well as for the main features of Montreal's manufacturing industry. After the Conquest, the French Canadians retreated to the countryside where the Church held them in the bondage of parochial structures preaching to them rejection of the city and of material riches. Without money, instruction or technical knowledge, without tradition or experience in business or industry, these future city dwellers were in no position to take over the control of industrial development. The latter was to completely escape their grasp to the benefit of immigrants, mostly British, who imported both capital and technology. French Canadians, on the other hand, constituted the ideal source of manpower for low-technology and low-salary

industries like those producing common consumer goods (food, clothing, etc.) especially in view of the fact that there was a great demand for such goods in Montreal which was by far the most populous city in Canada. To quote Cooper: "No people (were) better adapted for factory hands, more intelligent, docile and giving less trouble to their employers..."¹⁶ If we exclude from these considerations industries linked to transport, the existence of such abundant, capable, and not very demanding manpower, together with the ready availability of raw materials fostered, towards the end of the last century, the creation in the Montreal region of a whole range of industries like flourmills, refineries, cotton-and-textile mills, clothing, shoe and tobacco plants, breweries, etc..., most of them processing industries for agricultural products.¹⁷ The 1871 census reveals that there were 22,784 persons from the Montreal district employed in manufacturing industries, while plants manufacturing shoes, clothes and tobacco employed almost half of that number. In 1911, at the very end of the Victorian era, 78,000 individuals were employed in Montreal's various plants; the clothing industry employed over 10% of that manpower and was responsible for 2/3 of the total Canadian output in that field. Metalworks, stimulated by the needs of the transport industry and new steel processing techniques, came second. Next come tobacco plants, flourmills, refineries, and

cotton-mills. These are revealing figures.¹⁸

The division of the city into two poles of concentration was further accentuated by the influx of immigrants from those two sources, i.e. the British from overseas and the rural French Canadians from the great plains. Moreover, social segregation had been intensified by the industrialization of the city. Disraeli, the British novelist and politician of the nineteenth century refers to "two nations" co-existing in the industrial cities of his days. The same reality was expressed by the great Dr. William Channing of Boston who wrote in 1841: "In most large cities, there may be said to be two nations, understanding as little of one another, having as little intercourse as if they lived in different lands."¹⁹ In Montreal, though, Disraeli's or Channing's "two nations" are no longer a metaphor expressing the cleavage between the social classes according to economic strata: they represent two groups which are separated along racial and linguistic lines as well as along social and economic lines. In the Canadian metropolis, the ruling class of the "haves" is usually anglophone while the proletarian "have-nots" are usually francophone. Even worse, this division is physically imprinted into the soil and is reflected in the quality of the buildings. Gabrielle Roy appropriately described this reality in these words: "Ici, le luxe et la pauvreté se regardent inlassablement, depuis qu'il

y a Westmount, depuis qu'en bas, à ses pieds, il y a Saint-Henri."²⁰

Montreal is divided into two distinct cities, or even three cities, if one takes into account the existence of a mixed, shifting, predominantly Jewish population, centred around St. Lawrence Boulevard and serving as a buffer zone between the two linguistic groups. This division has not gone unnoticed by most of the observers and visitors who wrote down their impressions of Victorian Montreal. The theme of "two solitudes" on which C. H. Farnham expanded in an important article on Montreal written in 1889, is usually underlying such remarks.²¹ To wit, these few lines from a description of Montreal published in the 1882 issue of Picturesque Canada:

There is no fusion of races in commercial, social or political life, the differences are sharply defined, and appear to be permanent... It is easy to trace the two main divisions of population of Montreal. Taking St. Lawrence Main Street as a dividing line, all that is east of it is French, all that is west of it is English speaking. The two nationalities scarcely overlap this conventional barrier, except in a few isolated cases.²²

We shall now follow the topographical development of the city during that period of its history in order to uncover the patterns of settlement of these human groups.

3. The Impact of Industry

In the 1830's, when O'Donnell's neo-gothic church surprised the colony and inaugurated the era of Victorian architecture in Canada, Montreal was still a small town centered around its original commercial nucleus and first centre of economic activities. True, it was surrounded by suburbs like St-Antoine, St-Laurent, and Quebec, but they did not reach out very far. Moreover, their expansion was limited by the necessity to remain within accessible reach of the centre of economic activity. There were few employment opportunities in the suburbs as industrial development was in its infancy: a few tanneries, the small soap-works of Griffintown and Molson's Brewery, to name but a few. This explains why urban development was still confined to the lower terrace and did not reach much beyond the limits of the legal and administrative territory of the town; these limits had been set in May 1792 and, as stated earlier, they corresponded roughly to today's Atwater Avenue to the south, Pine Avenue to the east, and Frontenac Street to the north.

Industrialization would soon transform the landscape. Industry created employment and thus attracted both manpower and population. Yet, at a time when adequate means of transport and communication within the town did not yet exist, industry had a direct influence on the very structure

of population settlement and on the topographical orientation of the urban development. The need for a defence system had played a part in the structuration of human settlement on the island which industry would now take over. The Lachine Canal district was the first to be industrialized. This was to be expected, as the site was at the hub of water and rail transportation and the canal's locks provided the necessary hydraulic energy. Ogilvy's flourmill and the Redpath sugar refinery settled at the mouth of the canal for these very reasons. Extending south of the old Griffintown district, on either side of the canal, a workers' district quickly developed; it would be called "Ste-Anne" but was sometimes referred to as "Little Lowell" or "Fall-River". Most of the district's inhabitants were poor Irish immigrants who found jobs in shipyards and other industries which, like flourmills, did not require very skilled manpower. The construction of Victoria Bridge - a gigantic project for that time - and the establishment of the Grand Trunk Workshops at Pointe St-Charles contributed to the settling of the district. In 1871, the district already harboured 18,639 inhabitants. In 1911, Ste-Anne could justifiably be called the capital of industry for the number of people (19,000) employed in its shipyards, factories, and other plants, was greater than the population of the district forty years earlier. In fact, one quarter of all workers employed by

industry in Montreal worked in Ste-Anne.²³

The industrial development of that section of Lachine Canal was not confined to that one district. It moved further to the southwest, outside the municipal boundaries of Montreal, probably because Ste-Anne soon became saturated, but also in order to escape the burden of municipal taxes. The new territory, invaded by industrial development would eventually be organized into three distinct municipalities - St-Gabriel, Ste-Cunégonde and St-Henri, and the labour force would be predominantly employed in metal plants. The new districts' population rose to 15,770 inhabitants by 1881 and reached three times that figure twenty years later (48,063).²⁴

Even today, this industrial "valley", seen from the heights of the Turcot interchange presents a picture of gloom. The district became a festering ground for social vices and the environment was degraded to an extent that was unfortunately all too characteristic of nineteenth century industrial cities. In Montreal, as elsewhere, long hours of work, low salaries, and exploitation of women and children as a source of cheap labour became a common practice. In Montreal as elsewhere, slums became the Victorian era's most dominant feature in the city.²⁵ Herbert Brown Ames was a show manufacturer, who, like many of his contemporaries, was also a social reformer. He carried out a sociological study which was rather

advanced for the times (1897), entitled The City Below the Hill; it covered approximately one square mile, including parts of the Ste-Anne and St-Antoine districts. Some of the facts revealed in this study attest to the harsh conditions in which the population lived. On housing and environmental conditions, Ames' study reveals that on some streets the population density varied between 200 and 300 inhabitants per acre, that half the living quarters within the confines of the studies area were overcrowded, i.e. there was more than one person per room, that half the occupied lodgings were not equipped with inside toilets, and that for a large section of the district, rather symbolically called "the swamp" and harboring some 15,000 inhabitants, there was but one single green space, namely Richmond Square which barely covered an acre. Such living-and-environmental conditions in the area covered by the study may be related to the mortality rate which averaged 22.47 per thousand inhabitants, with black districts where the rate climbed to 40 and 44, whereas in the same year, the mortality rate in the wealthy districts of the "city on the hill" (Westmount, etc.) was a mere 13 per thousand inhabitants.²⁶

More recently, in her novel Bonheur d'occasion - a novel of some international renown - Gabrielle Roy described the St-Henri district with images of poverty, misery, boredom, human degradation and deterioration of buildings and of the

environment ...

Autrefois, c'étaient ici les confins du faubourg; les dernières maisons de Saint-Henri apparaissaient là, face à des champs vagues; un air presque limpide, presque agreste flottait autour de leurs pignons simples et de leurs jardinets. De ces bons temps, il n'est resté à la rue Saint-Ambroise que deux ou trois grands arbres poussant encore leurs racines sous le ciment du trottoir.

Les filatures, les élévateurs à blé, les entrepôts ont surgi devant les maisons de bois, leur dérobant la brise des espaces ouverts, les emmurant lentement, solidement²⁷.

Inevitable as this vision of despair and injustice may seem, it fits an era when "laissez faire" became a doctrine, and when housing developments grew everywhere in utter chaos, driven by blind, commanding forces: on the other hand, the appetite for profits and comfort of a daring class, made up of people speculating in consumer goods, manpower, and land, and, on the other hand, human hordes seeking their daily bread, a class of workers who were poorly paid because they were too numerous and poorly qualified. It is small wonder, then, that working class districts had to do without the most elementary community services. Blanchard points out that Ste-Cunégonde was without an aquaduct until 1879 and without sewers until 1887.²⁸ It is small wonder then, that the spontaneous growth of the suburbs did little to transform the

structures of the invaded rural domain. The uniform and monotonous orthogonal grid of streets was merely superimposed on the old pattern of land division of the rural "côtes". This topic has been dealt with in Chapter II.

Like St-Henri and Ste-Cunégonde, another working class suburb would rapidly burgeon to the north and outside the boundaries of Montreal: Hochelaga. It too owed its growth to an industrial development which the advent of electricity had accelerated. The village of Hochelaga extended north of the old suburb of Quebec and it was an ideal location for heavy industry because of its proximity to the port and to the Canadian Pacific Railway tracks. When the Angus shops were established on that location, the railway became one of the most important sources of employment. After Ste-Anne, Hochelaga-Maisonneuve became the most dense industrial district with some 15,000 workers.²⁹

Inside the administrative boundaries of the city of Montreal, the old suburbs of St-Antoine, St-Laurent and Ste-Marie (as the old Quebec district was now renamed) were now subdivided into boroughs or at least referred to as such, and were experiencing a remarkable industrial growth, parallel to that of Ste-Anne and the outside suburbs. Light industry for ordinary consumer goods like clothes, for which the rigours of the climate created a great demand, was not too dependent

on rail or water transport. These districts supplied the necessary manpower as well as a ready and expanding market. Thus, St-Antoine became the shoe district. Its population rose from 23,925 residents in 1871 to 48,638 in 1911. By then, St-Antoine had already encroached on the beautiful slopes of Mount-Royal, towards Côte-des-Neiges, Côte St-Antoine and the future Westmount and towards Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, all of which would become autonomous municipalites in 1881. The suburb of St-Laurent, which was the centre of the garment industry, was subdivided into several boroughs: St-Laurent, St-Louis, St-Jacques and part of St-Antoine. St-Laurent was the first district to have deeply penetrated the Sherbrooke Street Terrace. St. Lawrence Street, which became the main artery as well as the backbone of this north-westerly development, opened the way, followed closely by Bleury, St-Urbain and St-Denis. A number of streets were drawn perpendicularly to the latter streets, thus gradually consolidating the encroachment of the city on the rural territory. The district of Ste-Marie became the gathering point of French Canadians looking for work, as the shoe factories and tobacco industry were looking for a qualified but undemanding and resourceless source of manpower. Like Ste-Anne and St-Henri, it became a working class district, generating a uniformly boring urban environment; its population grew from 13,695 residents in 1871 to 54,910 in 1911. A

similar demographic growth rate would cause the population of the adjacent districts of St-Jacques and St-Louis to double over the same period.³⁰

From the preceding description it appears that industry played a major part in tearing apart the traditional framework of Montreal and in shaping urban development. Two other factors also came into play. In 1865, Msgr. Bourget divided the old Parish of Montreal into several parishes. This decision accelerated the settling of the suburbs, as newcomers would now be assured that parishes - which were ecclesiastical administrative units as well as bases for social organization - could be established when necessary. There was an obvious need to be fulfilled in this respect, for within the next two years, St-Jacques, St-Patrice (1866), Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, St-Enfant-Jésus of Mile-End, St-Henri, la Nativité in Hochelaga, St-Vincent-de-Paul and Ste-Brigide (1867) became autonomous parishes. In 1876, the law on municipal corporations, passed in Quebec City, would allow parishes to become incorporated as civil municipalities if they so wished; this would accelerate the process of decentralization. The second factor which favored the gradual dismemberment of the traditional framework relates to the constant technical progress in the organization of public utilities, like the use of iron and cast-iron pipes for aqueducts and sewers, of gas for lighting and streets, etc.

Decentralization, however, was still limited.

Indeed, lack of adequate means of communication and of inner city mass transportation forced the population to concentrate near the sources of employment, around plants and factories, a fact which accounts for the high population density of the first industrial districts such as Ste-Anne and St-Henri. This explains why there are no strictly residential suburbs or districts until the end of the nineteenth century.

Definitive changes appeared in 1861 following the inauguration by City Passenger Railway of a horse-drawn omnibus service. In spite of its inherent limitations, this service rapidly expanded, and, for the first time, the workers were given a chance to live away from their immediate but often sordid and degrading place of work. This explains why districts like St-Laurent would rapidly expand up to the second terrace, a magnificent site, which until then had been preserved for the rich suburbanites who could afford to keep a carriage. In 1888, the omnibus service carried over 8.5 million passengers. The rate of change was further accelerated from 1892 onwards, when an electric tramway system was inaugurated, quickly relinquishing the horse-drawn omnibus into the realm of memories. At the end of their first year in service, the electric tramways had already carried twice as many passengers as the omnibus system in 1888. The speed and regularity -

even in winter - of the new system were its greatest assets. Moreover, regional - i.e. in those days - lines so linked Montreal to distant communities. Thus, Park and Island Railway would run between Lachine and Sault-au-Récollet while the Montreal Island would serve the east end, Maisonneuve and Bout de l'Ile.³¹

Whereas on a national and regional level, the transportation revolution had fostered the concentration of economic and productive activities in Montreal as well as the onset of urban growth, on a city level, transportation would be primary factor of greater dispersion and of population growth outside the city; this process would be further accentuated by the advent of automobiles. With the advent of electric tramways and, in 1879, of the telephone³², distance and communication difficulties, which had been limiting factors in the frontier town, were no longer an obstacle in the way of building expansion. The consequences soon followed; the strictly residential suburb became a reality. Thus, in the rich high-class suburb of Westmount the population rose from 3,000 residents in 1891 to 8,856 in 1901 and to 14,579 a decade later. In this particular case, it was not so much the increase in population which was noticeable as the number of "châteaux" which were erected on the side of Mount-Royal. Outremont, another residential suburb, was almost non-existent in 1881;

in 1911, it harbored 4,820 residents. This shortening of distances did not only benefit the elegant suburbs: the county of Maisonneuve, which was subdivided into industrial townships, experienced a prodigious growth: from 65,178 inhabitants in 1901 to 170,998 ten years later! Verdun is another example. The development of the old fief of Verdun had been thwarted by frequent inundations in parts of its territory as well as by its distance to Montreal's centre of activities. As soon as a dike had been built to protect the area from the rising of the river and as soon as mass transportation brought the suburb within reach of sources of employment and economic activities, Verdun's population grew accordingly: 296 inhabitants in 1891, 1,898 in 1901, 11,629 in 1911. Finally, Lachine also became the site of an extraordinary boom, attracting a large population as well as very important and technologically advanced industries, such as Dominion Bridge in 1882 and Canadian General Electric ten years later.³³

The chronology of the creation of parishes following the division of the Parish of Montreal in 1865 is very indicative of the rythm of urban growth throughout the island. Thus, for instance, from 1870 to 1900, 17 French parishes and three English parishes were founded on Montreal's territory; between 1900 and 1920, this number doubled: 38 French parishes, 8 English parishes and three neo-Canadian parishes.³⁴ Since

the law on municipal corporations of 1876 allows each parish to be incorporated as a municipality, the parish, which had always been an ecclesiastical unit of administration, now became a territorial civil entity. The territory around the judicial and political boundaries of Montreal was subdivided into small autonomous municipalities. In 1871, there were but four towns and three cities on the island; in 1901, there were already eleven towns and eight cities.³⁵

Many of these municipalities would be shortlived. Some like Hochelaga and St-Jean-Baptiste were too close to the City of Montreal. Others, like St-Henri, Ste-Cunégonde or Maisonneuve shared identical interests with Montreal. Most were in no financial position to offer the services and assume the costs of public utilities for proper urban living. Many of these small municipalities would gradually be annexed to Montreal. It would be pointless to list all the annexations: for instance, between 1883 and the end of the First World War about 30 municipalities were annexed, from a populous city like St-Henri with 21,000 residents or St-Louis with 35,000 residents to a small village like Côte-des-Neiges or Villeray. One must however remember that it was through annexations that the City of Montreal grew out of its old 1792 boundaries to the point of completely surrounding some municipalities which had remained autonomous such as Westmount and Outremont and

of extending its jurisdiction to the shores of the Rivière-des-Prairies.³⁶

The abolition of distances, the prodigious growth of population, the considerable extension of its administrative territory, all these factors affected the very character of the old city. It was launched on a process of morphological transformations which would leave it totally different from the small town designed in the early 19th century by the Commissioners McGill, Richardson and Mondelet. The city progressively lost its residents and surrendered its social functions to the sole benefit of commercial and administrative functions. The latter took over the entire territory of Coteau St-Louis. St-Paul Street, which had been the privileged artery of retail merchants, became the centre of wholesale trade and warehouses, close to the harbour and to the railway services. The retail trade moved first on Notre-Dame Street, then to St. James Street and finally, under the impetus of merchants like Morgan, Birks, Ogilvy and Dupuis, who were the first to establish their stores in the early 1890's, to St. Catherine Street, which would become the most prominent commercial street in the metropolis. At the same time, the rich houses on St. James Street relinquished the street to the banks, the financial institutions, and the newspapers and moved to the Sherbrooke Terrace. St. James Street became the Dominion's Wall Street

while Sherbrooke Street took on an appearance of wealth and distinction and some travellers, in search of a comparison, likened it to the Champs Elysées in Paris! Public administration grew in importance as the administered territories expanded; the population grew in numbers as a result of the concentration of economic and productive activities. Hence, new buildings had to be built: City Hall, the Court House, the Post Office, etc. Together with the commercial and financial institutions they transformed Dollier de Casson's "cathedral" town into a modern city. (Pl. 29, 30 & 31)

4. Victorian Architecture

From the foregoing paragraphs it is obvious that Victorian Montreal no longer reflected the influence of the seignorial class. Moreover, by 1838, the Sulpicians had, in theory if not always in practice, renounced their rights to the property of the island. Under the French regime, they had been the ruling class, and when the Anglo-Saxon merchants landed, they attempted to maintain their social status through a tacit agreement with the Tory aristocracy. Now they would shy away from this rising class of merchants and industrialists, for this new bourgeoisie was active and hard-working and intent on promoting the new order. Of the five mayors who ran Montreal's administration from 1850 to 1860, namely Fabre, Wilson, Staines, Nelson and Rodier, only Nelson represented



29 and 30. Montreal around 1870, view towards the mountain.

31. Montreal around 1870, view from the mountain.



the old order; the others were either merchants or industrialists.³⁷ The new ruling class had its own gospel, the aim of which was wealth and comfort; the means to achieve these goals were free enterprise, audacity and ambition.

The previous era had left its own contribution to architecture in the form of the two Notre-Dame Churches which had succeeded each other on Place d'Armes; the new era would produce new monuments attesting to the new values, for the bourgeoisie would soon monopolize architecture for its own purposes. Was it mere symbolism that the factory chimneys of the industrial districts should henceforth rise as high as the church steeples and the huge grain elevators along the harbour tower over the bell-towers of O'Donnell's Notre-Dame Church? Equally revealing is Montreal's City Hall, with its mass and prolific decoration, towering over the Château de Ramezay across the street. The fact that Bonaventure Station, Windsor Station, or Viger Station should accommodate more people than Place d'Armes or the Champ-de-Mars, and that one of the greatest architectural successes of the time should be a bank, viz. John Well's Bank of Montreal, is hardly surprising.

The architectural image of Victorian Montreal is obviously more complex than that of the previous era and could not be restricted to a description of the few buildings which are the expression of social pretensions. Unprecedented

progress had been achieved during that era in the scientific and technical fields; revolutionary developments had transformed the fields of communications, transport, and production; organization and the first large concentration of population had altered the shape of the towns. Such an era had to find new solutions for the new functions and problems. Indeed, the first bridge across the river, Victoria Bridge, was a railway bridge, built according to new concepts and with new materials. Increasingly specialized functions needed appropriate architectural programs as well as suitable structures. Warehouses, commercial buildings, factories, and railway stations appeared for the first time. For the first time also, buildings began to rise in height, first levelling off at five or six storeys, then rising higher with the advent of the elevator. With the exception of the residences of the wealthy, which would remain symbols of the latter's prosperity, human habitation would lose its individual, family-centered character and become a consumer good, subjected to criteria of economic profitability as well as the standardization and industrial prefabrication.

Architecture however, is more than a function or the expression of a technology: it is a reflection of cultures and ideologies, it is both form and spirit. Thus, moving from a rural world still in the bonds of a medieval way of life to

a modern urban world, French Canadians would attempt to maintain their ancestral and traditional values as a protection against the anonymity of the urban environment. Religious architecture was still the best way to express this concern. Farnham who wrote a sociological study on Montreal's two solitudes, would point out that parish churches in French-speaking districts are noticeable not so much for their architecture but because they reveal a kind of religious life which is still imbued with medieval traditions which were maintained with great vigour until the nineteenth century.³⁸ With little command over the economy, French Montrealers would follow rather than shape trends of development, a fact which is evidenced by the aspect of the environment in the populous districts. With a few rare exceptions - like the new St. James Cathedral erected on the edge of Dominion Square, City Hall by Architect Perrault or the National Monument (headquarters of the very nationalistic St - Jean Baptiste Society and a ridiculously pretentious building), banks, commercial buildings, railway stations, large residences and other buildings of architectural value - most prestigious buildings expressed the ideals of a rich ruling class which was almost exclusively Anglo-Saxon. When studying Victorian architecture in Montreal, one should know something about the mentality and culture of the Anglo-Saxons who were all too often depicted as "committed to commerce

and valuing modernity, progress..."³⁹.

Historians teach us that nineteenth century romanticism counteracted the excesses of eighteenth century rationalism with its own excesses. This is in accordance with history's pendulum - like motions which usually apply to human thought also. The Victorian era would hence be plunged into a turmoil of passions, feelings and emotions. Victorian man, inasmuch as he had attained fame and fortune, was an individualist who was very aware of his personality and eager to express himself in his own manner. The prevailing attitude towards architecture would differ from that of previous centuries when criteria of order, harmony, and "Beauty with a capital "B" had presided over architectural creations. On the contrary, the new architecture would express the Victorian man's strengths and virtues, his eccentricities, his individuality or his wealth. For the first time perhaps, architecture would not be regarded as a form of art subjected to its own rules but rather as a symbol of an admired and coveted reality. Thus, in England, Pugin would link Gothic architecture to his passion for Catholicism and the Cambridge Camden Society would try to revive the religious fervour of the Middle Ages through the new architectural style. In a like manner, when authoritarian Monsignor Bourget of Montreal wished to erect a tangible symbol of the attachment of Quebec's population of the Holy Sea, he borrowed

St. Peter's Basilica in Rome as a model for his new St. James Cathedral (now called Mary Queen of the World). Victorian man would choose his symbols from the historical styles, ranging from Greek to Baroque. At first the integrity of each style would be respected, but towards the end of all the styles would be shamelessly mixed in a last attempt to carry the message through visual stimulations.

This complacency towards an idealized past may seem surprising for an era which had tamed the power of steam and had mass-produced steel. It may seem rather strange for a society to make use of very modern structural principles and materials to build a bridge like Victoria Bridge across the St. Lawrence River and at the same time to revel in Christ Church's neo-Gothic style, in St. James Cathedral's neo-Baroque, or in the "Château de la Loire" architecture of the Viger station and hotel complex. Does the explanation lie in the fact that the bourgeoisie who achieved power and wealth lacked cultural roots? Centuries of culture weighed over the old regime's aristocracy. Thrilling at the wonders of travelling, and learning about past architecture through reading, engravings, and archeological research are signs of cultural insecurity and point to people who may have started their lives in poverty and a total lack of culture. This characteristic of the ruling class appeared more pronounced in British colonies,

and especially in Canada, than in the mother country.

As Arthur Lower pointed out, for the British Canadian ruling class, the era's romanticism was more like the kind of nostalgia only an exiled people could experience.⁴⁰ They were nostalgic for the British Empire, the greatest empire man had ever known, which dominated the world with its scientific progress and its virtues; they attached as much importance to appreciate London's Parliament buildings and the Crystal Palace at the same glance. This nostalgia made most British Canadians more British than the British themselves. To quote one Mr. Ballantyne, who lived in Montreal's own bastion of British descendants, known as the "Square Mile": "We were not a mere minority in the midst of a sparsely populated colony. We were proud citizens, builders of the largest and best empire the world had ever known."⁴¹ It is therefore not surprising that, in an epoch when everyone was entitled to his emotions and feelings, those who had earned power, prestige and wealth in a distant colony should have looked towards the mother country, the "Land of Hope and Glory" for architectural forms which would best express their nostalgia and sense of belonging. Distances had been considerably reduced by steam navigation, and cultural influences from Great Britain would be soon felt and welcomed in the Dominion. Thus, Ottawa's Parliament would be built in the neo-Gothic style of London's Houses of Parliament

and Christ Church would remain faithful to the canons set up by the Cambridge Camden Society; Montreal would erect its own poor version of Crystal Palace a mere decade after London and would build its own mediocre tubular bridge - Victoria Bridge - a decade after Britannia Bridge on Menai Strait.

Victorian architecture in Montreal, however, was no mere copy of British Victorian architecture. Depending on the buildings - and on the point of view - it was enriched or impoverished by many external influences which highlighted Montreal's geographical location as well as its cosmopolitan nature. The influence from the southern neighbours would mark several buildings and as the Americans were beginning to produce excellent architects like Richardson or Sullivan, these influences would yield happy results. As a rule, though, Montreal's Victorian architecture, both public and domestic, tended to be more ostentatious than in Great Britain; at times it was even vulgar in its display of the financial success and prestige of the newly rich.

This was unavoidable in a city where all immigrants had to land before deciding whether to settle permanently or to stay only temporarily, on their way to seek their fortunes throughout the Dominion of America. During that period of its history, Montreal was a cosmopolitan centre for business deals, influences and ideas which caused Arthur Lower to compare it

to a Canadian Shanghai'.⁴² And as many immigrants, among whom the Scots, succeeded beyond their dreams, they felt compelled to display their success for everyone to see. Indeed, the best reward for one's risks is still the display of the fruits of one's initiative and audacity... To quote an observer:

In perhaps no section of the Colonies, have Englishmen and Scotchmen made more of their opportunities than in Montreal. There is an air of prosperity about all their surroundings which at once impresses the visitor. Taken all in all, there is perhaps no wealthier city area in the world than that comprised between Beaver Hall Hill and the foot of Mount Royal, and between the parallel lines of Dorchester and Sherbrooke Streets in the West End.⁴³

This was the district of the audacious men who built Canada. They were wealthy merchants, captains on the international seafaring lines, railway entrepreneurs, industry magnates; they were the princes of the New World and of the New Era who in an attempt at self glorification, were to borrow from the old regime the outward signs of noble birth: the châteaux, the gardens and the large greenhouses designed to perpetuate summer in the Dominion of the North.

Within the framework of the study of architecture and of the environment in Montreal during the Victorian era, we shall first analyze public and religious buildings. We shall then turn to commercial architecture, which, at a time

when structures become increasingly specialized, is of growing interest. Next, we shall study human habitations and man's environment, in an attempt to discover the metropolis' heritage. One must however keep in mind that some of the buildings deemed worthy of our attention may not seem to be so from an esthetic standpoint. We are here mostly concerned with the kind of architecture which is most likely to help us discover the essence of Montreal. We shall not limit ourselves to buildings erected during Queen Victoria's reign, for even before her ascension to the throne, O'Donnell's Notre-Dame was already pointing to a very Victorian attitude towards architecture. This attitude would unfortunately far outlive the Queen's reign.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SOMEWHERE BETWEEN GOOD AND MEDIOCRE: PUBLIC AND RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE

One thing is certain - there is something in architecture generally, and Canadian architecture in particular, for everyone to enjoy.
Alan Gowans.¹

1. Neo-Classical and Neo-Gothic Architecture

Notre-Dame Church, by the Irish Architect O'Donnell, had inaugurated, in a naïve but convincing manner, the era of Victorian architecture in Montreal as well as in the Province. However one cannot draw the conclusion that Victorian architecture was solely comparable to the renaissance of the Gothic style, even though this renaissance was particularly successful in Canada where it constituted the first national expression of architecture. Far from being a style in itself, Victorian architecture is above all a particular attitude towards the art itself; it is a state of mind which expresses itself by resorting to historical styles. In fact, as Jordan stressed, no other architecture informs us better about its creators, and their arrogance and doubts as Victorian architecture does.² In Montreal, the neo-Gothic style was only one amongst many which had won the favour of religious architecture. The architecture of public buildings continued for the time being to be inspired by a romantic classicism imbued with

Greek renaissance; Bonsecours Market and the old Court House are good examples of this style. (Pl. 34, 35 & 37)

We know very little about the construction of Bonsecours Market and not much more about its architect William Footner. He had spent a part of his life practising in Montreal; among other buildings he built the Court House in Sherbrooke which, incidentally, shows some affinity of style with Bonsecours Market. The latter cost approximately 70,000 pounds sterling, a sum which was considered extravagant for that period. However, in the words of contemporaries, the "striking beauty" of the building compensated for this expense³.

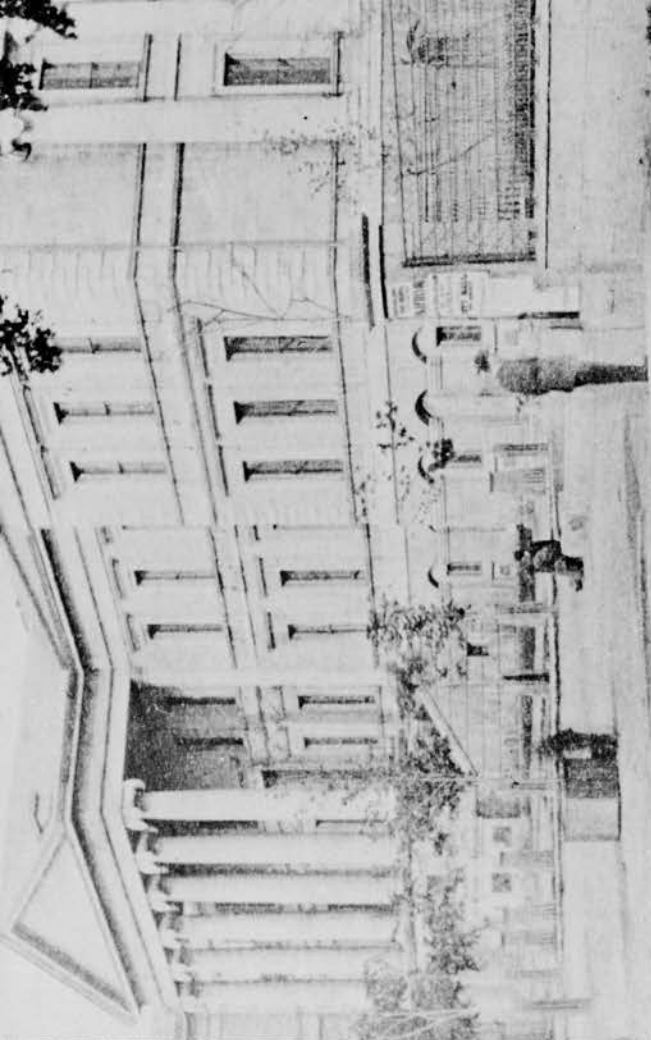
The building has survived in an acceptable condition after suffering floods and fires - in 1946, fire completely destroyed the dome - as well as the onslaught of merchants who propped their stalls against the exterior walls. It is a building of great architectural value with a place in the history of the city and of the nation; indeed, it once served as the Town Hall and as Parliament⁴. It has been restored at great expense, during the past years, to its former splendours, at least on the outside, for the interior has undergone alteration to accommodate the building's new administrative functions.

The building, which is of considerable dimensions (over 500 feet in length), with its three storeys and its soaring dome, dominates the rue des Commissaires and the



32. View of the Champ-de-Mars in 1830, after a drawing by R. A. Sproule.

33. St. James Street in 1850, after a water-colour by John Murray.



34. The old Courthouse around 1864. John Ostell and H.-Maurice Perrault, arch., 1849-57.

35. Bonsecours Market and the harbour around 1870.



adjacent part.⁵ Footner undoubtedly kept the exceptional site in mind when he conceived the building: in fact, on approaching the town from the river, it was the first important building that one perceived and a quick glance at the engravings of that period is sufficient to convince us that the architect succeeded in creating the desired effect. However, he did not neglect the façade on St-Paul Street: the slight recess of the building with respect to the alignment of other buildings on the street strongly contributes to highlight its presence. This may be a better solution than the extended perspective of a straight alignment, customary for this type of building. The latter disposition usually highlights the portico and the dome at the expense of the whole building.

The Old Market itself does not lack character. It is not as refined or as culturally pretentious as other similar contemporary buildings such as Kingston's Court House or City Hall, but it does possess its own picturesque charm. Its portico with magnificent doric columns, made of cast-iron smelted in England, which closely resemble those of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Niagara-on-the-Lake (1831), and its soaring dome confer a naïve but proud air which must have been characteristic of the young metropolis during this period of hope and remarkable prosperity of the beginning of the second half of the nineteenth century. (Pl. 35 & 37)

The old Court House was duller and more classical in appearance. It was constructed following the destruction by fire of the previous building in July 1844, on the same site, adjacent to Champ-de-Mars. It was designed in the classical British colonial style of Province House (1811-19) in Halifax and of Osgoode Hall (1829) in Toronto. It was the work of architects John Ostell and H.-Maurice Perrault who won the competition opened by the government to that effect in October 1849, but it was never a very successful building from a functional point of view. One must add, however, to the credit of the architects, that the gentlemen from the Bar had the plans frequently and substantially changed. They even went as far as attempting to change the style of the Court House by demanding a portico copied from that of the Bank of Montreal by John Wells or of that of the Church of Notre-Dame by O'Donnell. Quite a Victorian attitude, indeed.

The Court House was completed in February 1857 and complaints were soon made about its poorly lit rooms, its humidity and inadequate ventilation; moreover, before long there was insufficient space to meet the growing needs. The latter inadequacy was overcome by the worst possible solution, namely, by the addition in 1890-94 of a supplementary storey, adorned with a dome, which contributed towards the complete negation of the work of Ostell and Perrault. Moreover, it was

all to no avail, for scarcely two years after the addition of this storey, which required an almost complete reconstruction of the original building (excluding the exterior walls which have not been changed) and which cost over twice as much as the construction of the Court House itself, there were again complaints about the shortage of space.⁶ (Pl. 34)

Of this odd ensemble so typical of the kind of errors of Victorian taste which are also apparent in the restoration of the Chapel of Notre-Dame de Bonsecours, only the original porch with its Ionic columns is worthy of attraction. Yet, as a porch it cannot compare with that of the Bank of Montreal. This bank situated on Place d'Armes and designed by Architect John Wells, is amongst the most elegant monuments of the metropolis. (Pl. 38)

As in the case of Footner, we know very little about John Wells. He was an Englishman by birth, and John Bland suggests that he was good enough as an artist to have exhibited his architectural designs at the Royal Academy in London in 1823 and in 1828.⁷ This claim has not been proven yet. In Montreal, he designed the Bank of Montreal Building as well as the Marché Ste-Anne, which was later transformed into the Union's Parliament and which was burned down in a dramatic fire in April 1849. He also designed a post office on St. James Street; other buildings bear his mark, but it is



36. The entrance to Lachine Canal towards the end of the 19th century.

37. Bonsecours Market around 1870. William Footner, arch., building started in 1842.

38. The Bank of Montreal around 1870. John Wells, arch., building completed in 1848.



not known whether he restored them or actually designed them. He and his son worked together as architects, landscaping architects and surveyors; among other assignments, they undertook the subdivision of the old McTavish estate. The manner in which they advertised themselves showed that they lacked neither knowledge nor modesty: they were prepared to execute works "in every variety of ancient and modern taste... as practised in Europe during the last century"⁸. This was exactly what ambitious Victorians were looking for.

Moreover, one may safely assume that the very fact that John Wells was hired to build the new Bank of Montreal Building indicates that he did enjoy a good reputation in his profession. Indeed, the Bank of Montreal was jealous of its prestige as the first and most powerful institution of its kind in the country. It was decided that the new headquarters would be built right beside the building it had occupied from 1819 to 1848, and that the new building should stand as a witness to the bank's achievements. It was the same reason which prompted the bank at the beginning of the twentieth century to call on the renowned firm of architects of McKim, Mead & White to enlarge Wells' building.

Of Wells' original building, only the façade on Place d'Armes remains today. This is, however, enough to appreciate the scale and the good proportions of the building

as well as the strength of the stonework details which were obviously the work of an agile and expert hand. It was a remarkable achievement; so would be - both in plan and in elevation - the alterations completed in 1903 by McKim, Mead & White as well as the façade on Craig Street. Percy Nobbs, who was an honest architect as we shall see later, referred to the latter as one of the finest achievements of its kind in Montreal and maybe even in America.⁹

Today, next to the anonymous but imposing skyscraper of the Banque Canadienne Nationale, the venerable façade by John Wells shyly seeks its place in the sun. But at the time of its completion, it was certainly worthy of position facing Notre-Dame Church on the old Place d'Armes. Both the church and the bank were indeed very good expressions of the Victorian era. The former because it symbolized religious fervour through its neo-Gothic style; the latter because it adorned a bank with a style which had always been a symbol of grandeur and conquest.

With John Wells' bank building, Montreal approached international standards of architecture for the first time. In its own right, the bank's façade may be compared to that of the famous Bank of the United States (1818-1824) built in Philadelphia by Architect William Strickland. During the same decade, another building would confirm the excellence of

architecture in the Canadian metropolis: Christ Church, the new Anglican Cathedral. Before analyzing the latter, let us comment on St. Patrick's Church (1843-47), another church built in the same style and marking another step in the neo-Gothic evolution in Canada. (Pl. 39)

Following the great Irish migration of the middle of the nineteenth century, the Irish population of Montreal quickly expanded: there were some 6,500 of them in the town in 1841. St. Patrick's Church was erected on a magnificent site which has since then lost some of its splendour because of the nearby skyscrapers. At the time of construction, it was the most significant neo-Gothic church after Notre-Dame Church. Other reasons, though, make it worthy of our attention; indeed, it marked a significant step in the understanding of the formal principles of the Gothic style as well as the end of the classical box-construction adorned with Gothic details.

The church was built by the French Architect Pierre-Louis Morin (1811-1886) who worked in close collaboration with another Frenchman, the Jesuit Félix Martin (1804-1886). It is not known which of the two men made the most significant contribution. Judging from Morin's comments on Notre-Dame, he certainly had a better grasp of the Gothic style than O'Donnell. Yet, St. Patrick's does reflect the art of a conscientious amateur like Fr. Martin. He was the founder of the Collège

Sainte-Marie, for which he drew the plans. It was a solid but somewhat naïve piece of work, probably inspired by Ostell and Perrault's Court House.¹⁰ Actually, the school acquired its fame for the quality of its teaching rather than for its architecture. Fr. Martin, though was well equipped to work in the Gothic style. His main source of information in the field of architecture was his brother Arthur who had made his fame through his monumental book on the windows of Bourges Cathedral; moreover, he was much in demand as a specialist in the field of restoration of Gothic cathedrals.¹¹ To return to St. Patrick's Church: it is a structure of remarkable simplicity on the outside - the apse in particular - built of carefully chosen materials and well adapted to the climate. It is somewhat heavy, though, and the bell-tower lacks a certain grace. These shortcomings do not seem to be attributable to the architects, but rather to Monsieur Quiblier who, as the superior of St-Sulpice, was their client. The original plans provided for a structure without a steeple and measuring 180 feet by 90 feet; Monsieur Quiblier had these dimensions extended to 223 feet by 105 feet and asked for a steeple which, much to the architects' chagrin, would never reach the height they had recommended for it.

Luckily, the interior of the church makes up for its somewhat heavy outside appearance. The volume is airy,

vast and elegant. The author of an article in the April 28, 1866 issue of *Minerve*, uttered a Victorian profession of faith when he approved of Gothic architecture because "it fulfilled the demands of the cult as well as those of the great thoughts it was meant to represent." He had indeed understood the dominant characteristic of St. Patrick's when he wrote: "upon entering the church, one is struck by its beautiful, neatly divided proportions."¹²

Gothic renaissance in Montreal reached its highest point with the new Christ Church Cathedral which was built on Ste-Catherine Street facing Phillips Square. The church, completed in 1859 and dedicated in 1867, had been erected to replace the previous Christ Church on Notre-Dame Street which was destroyed by fire in 1856. (cf. Chapter VI).

The almost archeological reproduction of the Gothic style achieved in the new Christ Church reflects the influence of the Camden Society of England on the architecture of Anglican churches from the 1840's onwards. Founded in Cambridge in 1839, this society of learned men who were preoccupied with church matters became interested in religious architecture not because it was a form of art with its own set of criteria, but rather because they were looking for a symbol to identify the true Catholic Church of England. At a time when Gothic architecture was considered by the British as an essentially indigenous

and very Christian form of art, it naturally became the most appropriate mode of expression. Yet, to consider Gothic architecture as the only true Christian architecture was not enough; for a variety of reasons, one particular period of the Gothic style was considered as more truly Christian and more worthy of symbolizing the Anglican Church; it was known as "ornate" or "Edwardian" Gothic. Hence, with all the intransigence for which it became famous, the Camden Society held that only that style should be accepted for the construction and restoration of Anglican churches.¹³

For the next fifty odd years, nearly all the Anglican churches in England and throughout the world would be built according to the precepts and instructions of this ecclesiological society. Christ Church Cathedral was the new church of a community which was anxious to assert its identity in a mostly Roman Catholic society, to reaffirm its links with Great Britain and to display its cultural pretensions in the midst of a French cultural environment. It is therefore not surprising to see the design of the church conform with the instructions and intransigent attitude of the Camden Society. Yet, it was not the only Christ Church in Canada to have accepted the dictates of the Camden Society. A similar church was built in Fredericton; it is probably the most remarkable of its kind in America and was built from plans drawn by the

great Victorian architect William Butterfield, the Cambridge Camden Society's favourite architect. The Anglican Cathedral of St. John's in Newfoundland is another example of an imported design: even the stones were imported from Scotland!

Exeter and Salisbury's Frank Wills, who designed both Fredericton's and Montreal's Christ Church Cathedrals, was a propagandist for this type of church architecture. In 1850, he published a book in New York entitled Ancient English Ecclesiastical Architecture (Stanford and Swords). He certainly did not lack practice, for between 1840 and 1856, he built no fewer than twenty churches in the United States. Even though his death in 1857, before the foundations were even laid, prevented him from directing the work on Montreal's Christ Church, his plans were followed to the letter. It was only under this condition that Thomas S. Scott was allowed to carry on his work.¹⁴

Although, as an architect, Frank Wills was inferior to Butterfield and Scott who were later consulted for the construction of the Canadian Anglican Cathedrals, his work in Montreal, which was modelled after the fourteenth century English churches with a regular cruciform plan, points to a sound knowledge of ornate Gothic. Such sound knowledge, in fact, that in spite of a few original details such as the capitals of the nave's arcades which portray the foliage of different

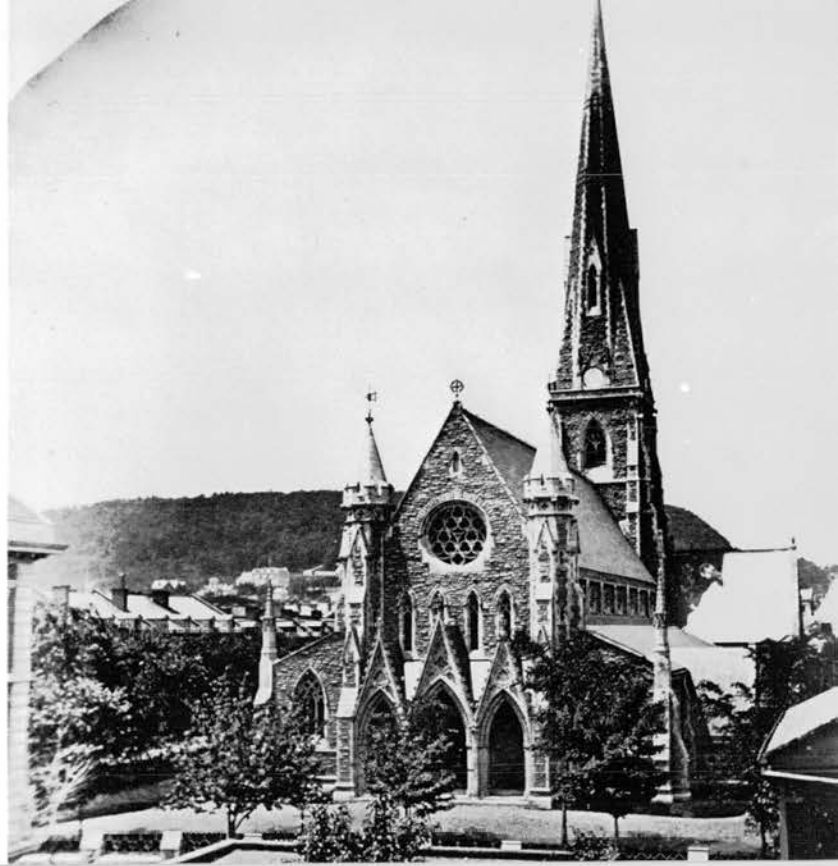
kinds of Canadian trees, the church looks more like a refined and carefully detailed scale model than like a consistent and original creation. The best view of the church is obtained from the top of Place Ville-Marie tower. From there, set in its patch of grass, it looks like a tiny, delicate exotic jewel... which is probably all it really is. For all its pretensions as well as its real qualities, Christ Church leaves us cold. A building like St. Patrick's, where an amateur has used his imagination in order to avoid the pitfalls of an exact copy, is more likely to move us. The steeple of Christ Church, however, is worth mentioning. It was one of the few to have been built of Canadian stone and was one of the most elegant, rising 127 feet above the tower. It was torn down in June 1927, because its weight caused fissures in the foundations. In 1940, it was rebuilt on a light steel-frame covered with aluminum slabs which had been especially treated to imitate stonework.¹⁵ (Pl. 40)

2. Neo-Baroque Architecture

The Gothic renaissance style was particularly appreciated in Canada. In fact, it became a truly national architectural style in the same manner as the classical renaissance in the United States in the years 1820 to 1830. This accounts for the fact that Ottawa's Parliament Buildings are neo-Gothic. In Montreal, where the style had been inaugurated with O'Donnell's Notre-Dame Church, it would enjoy a great



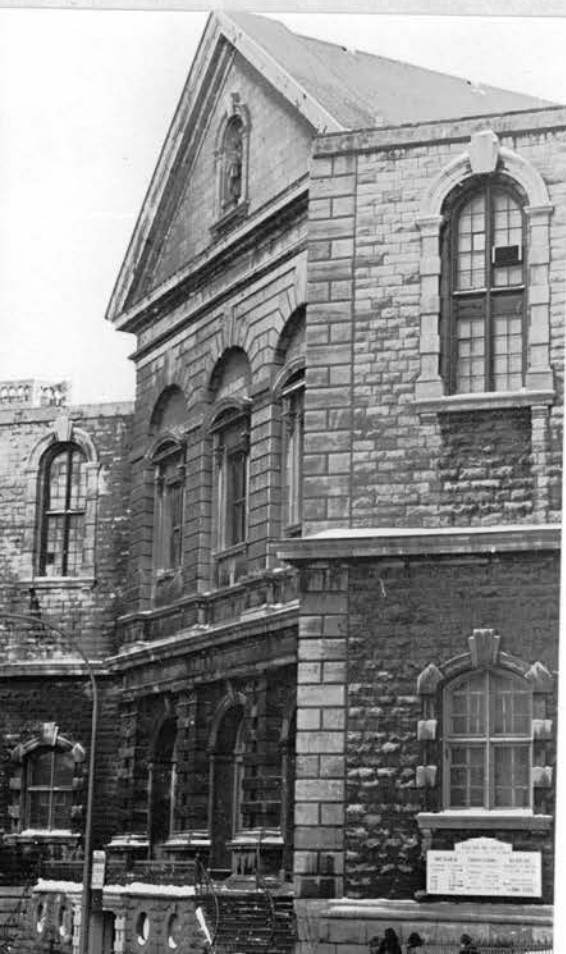
39. St. Patrick Church. Pierre-Louis Morin and Félix Martin, arch., 1843-47.



40. Christ Church Anglican Cathedral around 1870. Frank Wills and Thomas S. Scott, arch., 1857-59.

41. Du Gesù Church. Keely, arch., 1864-65.

42. St. James Cathedral under construction. Joseph Michaud and Victor Bourgeau, arch., 1875-85.



success. Yet, apart from some secular buildings, of no great architectural value, like Morrice Hall at McGill University, or the later "College" style buildings of certain faculties at the same university, the neo-Gothic style applied mainly to churches and other religious buildings.

Between 1850 and the beginning of 1900, many neo-Gothic churches were built in Montreal and in the neighbouring municipalities. While they do not possess the architectural qualities of St. Patrick's or of Christ Church, they nevertheless lend the community a character all of its own which caused Baron Hulot to write at the end of the century that above "des "toits d'argent" qui scintillent se dressent les tours de Notre-Dame, le dôme de Saint-Pierre et les flèches d'une trentaine d'églises, plus ou moins gothiques"¹⁶. These churches belonged to various denominations and were built in the neo-Gothic style, but with slight variations. The Church of Scotland asked Architect G. H. Smith to build St. Andrew's in 1850-51 on the present day site of the Bell Telephone on Beaver Hall. The new St. Paul's Church was to be the pride of the Presbyterian community.¹⁷ It was inaugurated in 1868 and was the creation of Frederick Lawford who had been a student of Sir Charles Barry; it was probably the most interesting church after Christ and St. Patrick's. Unfortunately, like St. Andrew's Church, it has disappeared. It was located at the corner of Dorchester

and Ste-Geneviève Streets, which was an unfortunate choice of location. Lawford and his partner Nelson built other churches in the same style, among others St. James Church built in 1863 for the United Church (at the corner of Ste-Catherine and City Councillors). It has a nave with rather fluid lines and galleries on either side, and its façade is today partially hidden behind store-fronts on Ste-Catherine Street. In 1865, they built St-Sauveur Church, which was originally an Anglican Church on the northwest corner of St-Denis Street and Viger Square; it is inspired by English primitive Gothic. St. George's Anglican Church is another good example: it rises, small and delicate, facing the massive Windsor Station. It was built by Architect William Thomas - we shall return to him later - who had won the competition set up for that purpose. Another Anglican neo-Gothic church, better known for its location than for its style, is the Church of St. James-the-Apostle on the northwest corner of Ste-Catherine and Bishop Streets. Protestants remained fond of the neo-Gothic style; the Presbyterian Church of St. Andrew and St-Paul, at the corner of Redpath and Sherbrooke West was built in 1932 in the same neo-Gothic style.

Compared to the temples of the Protestant faith, the Catholic churches were generally not as refined nor as historically faithful. It was John Ostell who drew the plans for St. James' Church after the great fire of 1852. All that

is left of it today are the rigid façade and the very high steeple (275 feet), which was only erected in 1880, according to Ostell's plans. This rather unique steeple has since been an excellent landmark in the downtown area, and for that very reason it deserves to be saved. As a whole, the architectural qualities of the Catholic churches vary from a naïve use of neo-Gothic styles, (as attested by St. Joseph's Church on Richmond Street, Ste-Catherine d'Alexandrie at the corner of Robin and Amherst Streets (now demolished), or St-Edouard at the corner of St-Denis and Beaubien Streets), to the great vigour displayed by churches like St-Joachim (Pointe-Claire) and St-Pierre Apôtre on Visitation Street, at the corner of Dorchester Boulevard, and built in 1851-53 by a very versatile Architect named Victor Bourgeau. We shall return to Bourgeau later.

The French Catholics soon reacted against the Gothic Renaissance. Whereas the beginning of the Victorian era witnessed a war of styles, in Quebec, this war reflected the rivalries between the Roman Catholic religion and the other faiths. The use of Gothic forms for O'Donnell's Notre-Dame had already stolen the limelight from the first Christ Church which had been built in a classical style. There is little doubt that the proliferation of neo-Gothic temples of the Protestant faith - which reached its peak with the erection

of the second Christ Church - was an important factor which accounted for the gradual loss of interest expressed by the Catholics for that particular style. The neo-Baroque would fill the gap thanks to the influence of one man in particular: Monseignor Ignace Bourget.

Msgr. Bourget (1799-1885) succeeded Msgr. J. Jacques Lartigue in 1840 as Bishop of Montreal; he was a man of his era. An astute, ambitious, and conservative man - some say reactionary - he was hard-working and his mind, for want of being very broad, was very clear; he headed the religious rebirth which marked this era. Heir to the ultramontanist tradition of Montmorency de Laval and of his successors, with an unlimited admiration for Rome as the symbol of authority of the Catholic Church in Montreal, Msgr. Bourget went so far as to demand that some churches in his diocese - among them, his own cathedral, a copy of St. Peter's - be built as replicas of churches in the Eternal City.

The history behind the construction of the Gesù on Bleury Street exemplifies the influence of Msgr. Bourget on the religious architecture of his time. In 1842, he secured the return of the Jesuits to Canada and urged them to build a college - College Ste-Marie - and a chapel to exercise their ministry. The chapel was at first built inside the building but soon proved too small, so the Jesuits decided to build a

larger church next to their institution. Plans were drawn in 1861 by Fr. Arthur Jones who had learned the art from Fr. Martin. He chose the Gothic style, "le beau style de St-Louis, celui de la Sainte-Chapelle, de la cathédrale d'Amiens, et, plus particulièrement celui de la cathédrale de Cologne..."¹⁸. Eclecticism was alive and well during the Victorian era! Jones' project seemed too expensive; it was a polite way of expressing fear over his lack of experience. The firm of Lamontagne and Perrault was then asked to prepare plans for a church "en pur gothique du XIIe siècle"; the emphasis was on "Gothic".

The plans, prepared by Lamontagne and Perrault to the Jesuits' satisfaction, were firmly refused by Msgr. Bourget. In his mind, a Jesuit church in his diocese had to take its inspiration from the Gesù in Rome. In fact he was not as much interested in the architecture of the Gesù as in the symbol represented by this Church of the Counter-Reformation. In a copy of the Gesù in Montreal, he saw the opportunity of impressing the "foreigners", i.e. the non-Catholics of the metropolis. This explains why architects Lamontagne and Perrault were asked to modify their plans to satisfy the bishop.

The new plans must have aroused his apprehensions, for they were again modified by an architect from Brooklyn, a Mr. Keely, who had built some 200 churches and who prided himself with knowing the Gesù like the back of his hand. The Gesù

was built according to his plans in 1864-65.

The claims of the New York architect notwithstanding, Montreal's Gesù in no way resembles its Roman counterpart except for a particularly horrible imitation of its "trompe-l'oeil" decoration. Apart from that particular aspect, there is no resemblance in plane, elevation or volume. Few elements, if any, - from the exaggerated transept and the basilica-style collateral, to the non-existent dome and the quasi-obscurity - are reminiscent of the powerful unified volume of the original Gesù with its light filtering down to the marble and the sensuous colours of its decoration. As for the main façade, for which Keely had designed two bell-towers - they would never go beyond the state of the towers' foundations - it bears no resemblance to that of Rome's Gesù, except, perhaps, for the use of the Italian Baroque style. Could it be that the very name Gesù held enough magic for Msgr. Bourget to be applied to any building, so long as it was not Gothic? At any rate, the only redeeming quality of Montreal's Gesù lies in the fact that it heralds the "picturesque" style which would later enhance Victorian architecture.¹⁹ (Pl. 41)

The construction of the Gesù was not Bourget's first experience with neo-Baroque; as early as 1852 he was considering building his cathedral using St. Peter's of Rome as a model. Nevertheless, the Gesù venture attests to the

bishop's significant influence on the religious architecture in his diocese. He never hid this fact and would openly state that it was "à l'évêque seul à fixer le plan et les principales dimensions des églises qui se (bâtissaient) dans son diocèse", and that he exercised this right "sans autre contrôle que celui du Souverain Pontife..."²⁰. The Anglican Church may have built under the dictates of the Cambridge Camden Society: Montreal's Catholic Church could only rely on the bishop, who was infinitely less competent in the field of architecture than the ecclesiological society, but certainly not less intolerant.

John Ostell and Victor Bourgeau were, each in his turn, Msgr. Bourget's favourite architects. It is therefore not surprising to see both producing neo-Baroque buildings during that time. Thus, Ostell overloaded the new episcopal palace with a new façade and a heavy dome in the Baroque style,²¹ and, in 1852, he added a powerful but austere façade in a very English Baroque style, to the delightful Church of the Visitation at Sault-au-Récollet. In the early 1850's, he designed two almost identical churches, in eighteenth-century Jesuit style: Notre-Dame-de-Toutes-Grâces Church and Ste-Anne Church, located respectively in the districts of the same name. Only the former remains today, as Ste-Anne was demolished recently: the façade resembles that of Rome's Gesù more than that of

Montreal's own Gesù did and seems to have been inspired by the façade Chaussegros de Léry had added to the parish Church of Notre-Dame in 1721. Like the latter, it is cold, solid, and austere. There is, alas, little to be learned from the interior which has been altered in the doubtful post-world war "modern" manner.²²

Victor Bourgeau (1809-1888) seemed to have been more favourably inclined towards his bishop's penchant for the Baroque. He was the son of a farmer from Lavaltrie and had been educated as a sculptor in the tradition of Quévillon and Baillargé, and while he did not have the theoretical background of an Ostell or a Wells, the sureness of his taste made up for this shortcoming. He followed a remarkable career as an architect and built no fewer than twenty churches and remodeled another twenty-three. In Montreal, Ste-Brigide, the Hôtel-Dieu, and the large convent of the Grey Nuns (on Dorchester Boulevard), with its splendid steeple, figure among his creations. His whole architectural output is characterized by three great qualities: simplicity, solidity and economy. He first started working in the neo-Gothic style - his first assignment was the sculpture of the Gothic details for O'Donnell's Notre-Dame - and built St-Pierre Apôtre (1851-53) in Montreal, and Three Rivers' Cathedral in 1858. Then, under Msgr. Bourget's influence, he became interested in Italian Baroque. The church

he built in Ste-Rose in 1850 was vaguely Baroque. In 1856, at Msgr. Bourget's instigation, he went to Rome for an on-the-spot study of St. Peter's basilica, which left him deeply impressed. The façade of the Church of the Assumption which he drew in 1859 was a modified version of the façade of St. Peter's Basilica. In 1866-67 he would combine the portico of Notre-Dame on Place d'Armes with the same façade copied after St. Peter's for the Church of St. Barthélémy in Berthier.

When Msgr. Bourget sent Bourgeau to Rome in 1856, it was not to allow him to complete his study of the Italian Baroque. He had a more immediate purpose in mind: to study and measure St. Peter's Basilica in order to build a scaled-down version of it in Montreal, in order to replace the old cathedral (on St-Denis Street) which, together with a large section of the city, had burnt down in 1852. Monseignor had indeed decided to go all out with his new cathedral and to prove the attachment of the Canadian Church to the Holy See with a faithful copy of St. Peter's Basilica. As he wished to display the glory of the Catholic faith in a more forceful manner, he went as far as attempting to impress the Protestant community of Montreal in its own quarters and to defy Christ Church on its own grounds. He chose a site for the new cathedral near the Canadian Pacific's new Windsor Station, right in the middle of the Anglo-Protestant section of the city, much

to the detriment of the French Catholic districts which this church was to serve. Both the choice of a site and the choice of style suscitated many objections. Bourgeau himself opposed the project. In his mind, one just did not copy St. Peter's Basilica, least of all scaled down. He obviously judged the project with the critical sense of an architect for whom the rules of scale, proportion, harmony and beauty inherited from the ancestral classical tradition still prevailed. Msgr. Bourget obviously saw the whole enterprise from a totally different angle and in a more Victorian spirit: architecture was first and foremost a symbol. Besides, if he had St. Peter's Basilica copied, it would be the best safeguard against the possibility that the Protestant might copy it first!

The obstinate Monseignor bided his time until he could realize his project. The opportunity presented itself in 1871, during the period of euphoria which was suscitated by the calling to arms of the pontifical zouaves in defense of the Vatican against the Italian nationalist army. It was a unique occasion: what greater proof of attachment to the Holy See was there than the reproduction on Canadian soil of St. Peter's Basilica? Work began in 1875 under the direction of Fr. Michaud, an amateur, whom Bourgeau felt compelled to help with his competence and experience, against his own principles and objections. The result was a strange monument, a curiosity

rather than an architectural achievement, which nevertheless became an essential component of the familiar environment of Dominion Square.²³ (Pl. 42)

With the dedication of St. James Cathedral in 1885, the neo-Gothic style in religious architecture finally yielded to the Italian styles in Montreal as well as in the Province. Religious architecture had now been freed from its yoke, for the variety of expressions of the Italian styles allowed for a greater freedom of interpretation. In turn, this freedom would contribute to the emphasis on the visual aspect of architecture rather than on the symbolic or spatial aspect. From then on, the Picturesque style would rule the field, in a quest for visual and plastic effects through the use of motifs borrowed from various historical styles, in order to create attractive ensembles.

Unfortunately, this quest for visual stimulation would at times be responsible for a certain degree of superficiality, vulgarity and bad taste. There are many examples of this amongst Montreal churches built at the very end of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century, particularly with respect to façades, for Victorian architecture proved unable to ensure any degree of unity between façades, volumes and planes. To mention but a few: St-Charles and St-Gabriel on Centre Street in Pointe St-Charles,

St-Enfant Jésus (corner St-Dominique Street and St-Joseph Boulevard), whose only redeeming quality is its setting on a lovely square. The last achievement of this pedantic trend would be completed with the erection of St-Joseph's Oratory on Mount Royal, a project which was started in 1925.

3. Second-Empire and Beaux-Arts Styles

A survey of public and religious buildings built during the Victorian era would show that many of them do not belong to the various categories of styles that we have analysed thus far, viz. the neo-classical, neo-Gothic and neo-Baroque styles.²⁴ Buildings like City Hall, Windsor Station or St-Sulpice Library belong to different categories. Like the buildings previously studied, they are not masterpieces, but they are sufficiently numerous and distinctive to justify a more thorough analysis.

City Hall, the new Post Office, Windsor Hotel and other less important but architecturally significant buildings like the Molson Bank, the Banque des Marchands or the Dominion Block all display common features.²⁵ They are all massive: they are firmly and heavily anchored to the ground. One feature of elevation which characterizes them in their tri-dimensional composition with one distinctive element, the curb roof, which constitutes a strong visual statement; it is often placed at different levels in order to accentuate different

parts of the building. The outer skin is usually decorated in a rich mixture of Renaissance and Baroque elements, which Hitchcock labelled the pompous modulation of a Renaissance revival.²⁶ Elements from the Georgian period are sometimes found, as in the Windsor Hotel, but as a rule, motifs borrowed from the Florentine and Roman palaces of the Renaissance are predominant and lend these buildings an easily identifiable texture.

These buildings constitute the North-American version of the Second-Empire style which originated in France. Whether this style, which gained universal popularity, reached Montreal directly from France or indirectly through England and the States is open to question; but the latter route is more likely for, in Montreal, the style has lost a great deal of its strength. From a standpoint of style, Montreal's City Hall is closer to the State War and Navy Building in Washington (built in 1871 by A. B. Mullet and perhaps the best example of this style in the United States), and Windsor Hotel is closer to Chicago's Palmer House than to Visconti and Lefuel's Nouveau Louvre, a building which launched the new style in Paris.

The old City Hall, built in 1872-78 by H.-Maurice Perreault (the architect who, with John Ostell, had won the bid for the Court House in 1849), was more elegant than the

later version. Indeed, Perrault's building was burnt down in 1922, and only the walls remained: another floor and a high curb roof were added to the new building. The volume of the original building had been articulated around a central tower and set within corner pavilions; the new building presented a more monolithic aspect and cut an almost cubic figure. (Pl. 54 & 55)

In 1873, while building City Hall, Perrault completed the new Post Office - located on the northeast corner of St. James and St-François-Xavier Streets which was later altered and finally demolished to make room for the present Bank of Montreal Building. It was probably the best example of Second-Empire architecture in Montreal. It was of a homogeneous composition, with powerful convex curb roofs; it was vigorous and not without a certain monumental scale which seemed to fit its function. There are few buildings in the same style that could rival it; the other buildings were relatively minor and only interesting because they fitted well into the picturesque and livery spectacle of the Victorian Street. The Molson Bank nevertheless deserves mention for it is a credit to the honest talent of George Brown who, together with William Thomas, was the most prolific anglophone architect of that period.²⁷ (Pl 61)

Windsor Hotel was another example of the many luxury hotels across the world which celebrated the glorious,

cosmopolitan image of Paris in the days of Napoleon III. Built on Dominion Square along Dorchester Boulevard's high plateau, it constituted an appropriate background for the city's largest square. The publicity for the hotel during its most glorious years proves that this palace was first and foremost a set for the rich, nostalgia-prone bourgeois. There were large halls "defying description" and salons "frescoed and furnished in strictly Egyptian style..."²⁸. The palace of Victorian splendours, where princes and other great people of this world used to stay, was dynamited out of existence to make room for the Imperial Bank of Commerce skyscraper.²⁹ (Pl. 67)

France was to launch another international fashion which would gradually supplant that of the Second-Empire. The new style would be called the "Beaux-Arts" style because it originated in the architectural teaching dispensed at the time at the Paris School of Fine Arts. From the second half of the nineteenth century, Paris became the mecca of architects, somewhat like Rome in the eighteenth century, a fact which accounts for the Beaux-Arts' influence, especially on the architects from the New World whose training was normally complemented by a stay in Paris.³⁰

The Beaux-Arts style was based on the premise that contemporary architecture was to take its inspiration from the monuments of the past using the resources of the present to

improve on them. However, this form of eclecticism was not left in the hands of the architect. Symbolism somehow came back to the fore and it was decided that contemporary buildings were to take their inspiration from the historical styles which could best express the spirit of their functions. Thus, the Romanesque would apply to abbeys and monasteries, Gothic and Byzantine styles to churches and Roman and Renaissance styles to public, commercial and domestic architecture, etc.³¹

It was easy to forecast that the Beaux-Arts style would enjoy a great popularity in Montreal, as a large section of the population had both cultural and sentimental links with the French metropolis: Montreal's School of Fine Arts would soon follow the trend set by the Paris School. This influence would unfortunately be long lasting.

One of Montreal's first proponents of the Beaux-Arts style was J. Omer Marchand (1873-1936), the first French Canadian to have studied at the Paris School of Fine Arts. After studying there between 1893 and 1903, he returned to Canada and specialized in church architecture. The Catholic cathedral he built in St-Boniface, in Manitoba, is a typical example of his work in the Beaux-Arts style. Some of his achievements in Montreal include Ste-Cunégonde's Church (1906), the Chapel of the Grand Séminaire on Sherbrooke Street West (1905-07), the interior of which was considered at the time

to be one the most serious and most attractive in town,³² and especially the Motherhouse of the Congregation of Notre-Dame (1907), also on Sherbrooke Street West. The latter building, of monumental proportions, is a good example of the use of Romanesque and Byzantine forms to express the religious character of the convent.

The list of Montreal buildings built at the end of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century in the Beaux-Arts style is a long one, from the Town Hall of the old municipality of Maisonneuve to the pretentious Masonic Temple at the corner of St-Marc and Sherbrooke Streets. As a rule they are rather mediocre and only a few deserve to be mentioned as typical examples of public architecture; commercial and domestic architecture will be analyzed in subsequent chapters. Eugène Payette built two libraries: the Municipal Library and St-Sulpice Library, which is now the National Library. The façade of the former, with its powerful, monolithic columns made of granite present a monumental Roman façade on Sherbrooke Street; the latter, which looks more like a Paris private mansion, is delicate and refined; its plan reflects the influence of the French School. The Museum of Fine Arts, again on Sherbrooke Street, was also designed in the Beaux-Arts' antique style by Edward and William Maxwell; it was inaugurated in 1912. The old Stock Exchange Building

(1904) on St-François-Xavier Street reminds one of the architecture of imperial Rome because of its architectural features and the marble and precious wood used in the interior decoration.³³

The attractiveness of a building like the St-Sulpice Library by Payette should not allow us to forget that the Beaux-Arts style would have a rather negative influence on Montreal's architecture as it had elsewhere in the world. It came at a time when new structural materials were available, when new building techniques had proved their worth and when the new architectural programs were to be radically changed to answer the needs which had arisen from the urban phenomenon. The pseudo-style imposed a yoke on architecture, reducing it to an ill-fitting cladding surrounding functions totally alien to the eclecticism of forms and the architectural symbolism of an exhausted era. The Ecole des Hautes Etudes Commerciales facing Viger Square provides a striking example of this type of pretentious architecture. Built by architects Gauthier and Daoust, it was considered at the time of its inauguration as "the finest and most dignified structure to that purpose in North America."³⁴ Today, one would think the exact opposite was true. Commercial architecture would reach the same dead-end; even though it was supposed to answer the growing demand for space, it would nevertheless remain enslaved to the forms

and concepts of the High-Victorian tradition. This, however, is the subject-matter of another chapter.

4. The Influence of Shaw and Richardson

It is a difficult task to trace the cultural influences which marked public and religious architecture in Montreal. This is mainly due to its privileged geographical situation as well as to its history. Thus, for instance, we have already learned that the neo-Gothic and neo-Baroque styles appeared partly as the result of the religious rivalry between Catholics and Protestants. The Second-Empire and Beaux-Arts styles which originated in France were particularly favourably received in this city where a large section of the population was francophone. One must, however, not neglect the fact that this soil was also receptive to Anglo-Saxon influences. This might explain why the Royal Victoria Hospital on Pine Avenue, built in 1887-93 by a London architect named Saxon Snell, was a replica of the Royal Infirmary in Edinburgh, and why Frank Lloyd Wright's very personal style was shamelessly plagiarized, even for fire stations.³⁵ We shall now deal with the British and American influences which enhanced a number of architectural structures in Montreal at the very end of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The Anglo-Saxon influence may be reduced to three

main streams. One is the ill-labelled American Romanesque, which is in fact an extension of the work of the great American Architect Henry Hobson Richardson. A second stream of influence originating with British Architect Norman Shaw - who was to England what Richardson was to the United States - found more followers and was also more varied than Richardson's. Facing the two giants, who both resorted to one form of eclecticism or the other, a reaction took place leaning towards a more discrete and purer form of classicism, a reaction which Hitchcock nicknamed the Academic Reaction; its best interpreters were undoubtedly McKim, Mead and White.³⁶

Leaving aside commercial and domestic architecture, two rather interesting buildings were built according to the précepts of the Academic Reaction in Montreal. One is the annex to the Bank of Montreal, to which we have already alluded: its façade on Craig Street is rather typical and in this case even remarkable. The building was designed by McKim, Mead & White at a time (1903) when they had mastered their architectural precepts as well as the means to put them into practice. Redpath Museum at McGill University is another building which interests us in this case. Inaugurated in 1880, it was designed by architects Hutchison and Steel, and constituted a romantic version of Greek Renaissance. Highlighted by its magnificent site, it has an imposing mass; its proportions are

fair, even though the portico's entablature is somewhat heavy. It does, however, look better from a distance; a closer look reveals a lack of restraint in the decoration and a rather curiously curved façade on McGregor Street. This did not prevent the building from being included in Ferguson's History of Modern Architecture.³⁷

As far as the influences of Norman Shaw and of Richardson are concerned, they are best exemplified by buildings found on the McGill campus. Indeed, towards the end of the century, McGill University was already expanding and aspiring to the world reputation it would attain some decades later. As McGill was the hub of Anglophone intelligentsia, its class of intellectuals would naturally try to identify with buildings which reflected the architectural excellence of the day. Of all the buildings on the campus, Redpath Library best reflects this architectural excellence. Its style was inspired by the very personal style of one of the best architects America had ever produced: Henry Hobson Richardson. His style - which would be enormously popular between 1875 and 1890 - took its inspiration from a form of the Romanesque which was not very archeologically oriented. It was not simply a revival of the Romanesque or just neo-Romanesque. Richardson went beyond eclectic juggling: his formal expression is logical and functional and shows an intuitive feeling for the nature and

characteristics of materials which would cast Richardson as one of the forerunners of modern architecture and an essential link in the explanation of the work of Root, Sullivan and Wright.³⁸ Some of these qualities are apparent to a degree in the Redpath Library. The building is asymmetrical and as rigorous and solid as a fortress; its assertive semicircular arches are characteristic of Richardson; the stonework is robust and gives a feeling of perennality. The interior, which lacks the link of continuity with the exterior, has its own character. The various masses of the building do not, however, seem articulate enough: the belfry is not high enough for its mass, and the whole structure looks somewhat stiff. (Pl. 62)

The library was built in 1890-91 by Sir Andrew Taylor and Gordon, then enlarged a first time in 1901 and again in 1921 according to plans drawn by Nobbs and Hyde. As an architect, Sir Taylor was very active towards the end of the nineteenth century. He was awarded many contracts to build branch offices for the Bank of Montreal and became involved in designing the kind of heavy-looking residences which were fashionable in those days. One of his contributions to architecture in Montreal seems to have been the use of colourful construction materials like red and brown stones.³⁹ In 1890, while he was an associate of Hodge and Davis, he started another building for McGill University, the Macdonald Physics

Building. This building is also reminiscent of Richardson's influence, although to a lesser degree: the organic unity found in the Redpath Library has yielded to a form of the Picturesque based on a sophisticated juxtaposition of medieval forms and themes.

The Macdonald Engineering Building was erected near the Macdonald Physics Building in 1907 by Architect Percy E. Nobbs. It took its inspirations from the British architectural traditions, in particular from the work of Norman Shaw who practised his art with a great deal of success in England during the second half of the nineteenth century. It is difficult to pinpoint Shaw's style: on the whole it is an eclectic mixture of seventeenth century Dutch style and English William and Mary as well as Queen Ann styles; it exudes charm, sensitivity, imagination and a wish to please. The Macdonald Engineering Building with its rising Dutch gables is somewhat reminiscent of Shaw's style.

Two years earlier, Nobbs had completed the McGill Student Building on Sherbrooke Street, which, with its characteristic bay-windows also showed the influence of Shaw's work. It is unpretentious, simple and well proportioned. Another building inspired by Shaw's work and displaying the same simplicity as the McGill Student Union Building is the Central Fire Station on Youville Square in Old Montreal. It was

designed in 1903 by Architects Perrault and Lesage. While not a masterpiece, this diminutive building with its small watch-tower does add a decorative note in the midst of the Square.

Royal Victoria College is another structure on the McGill campus which was built in the Shaw tradition. Attractively located at the end of the perspective of Union Street, it was completed in 1899. While not presenting any outstanding features, it does however carry the characteristic themes of rising Dutch gables and shallow bay-windows. Its architect was the celebrated Bruce Price. Price (1845-1903) was undoubtedly one of the most influential American architects in Canada, together with his compatriots McKim, Mead and White. His all too brief career as an architect was typical of the opportunities for success which the Victorian era thrusting onto talented, ambitious, hard-working individuals. While rather poor during his youth, as he was the breadwinner of the family, he spent his spare time studying architecture. He had a pleasant and attractive personality and was much sought after as a guest among the high society; he soon became one the most prolific and most prosperous architects in America. He did not limit his activities to the sole United States; he was commissioned by several other countries and did a lot of work in Canada. Indeed, he contributed to the launching of the "Château de la Loire" fashion for the construction of stations and hotels for

the Canadian Railways. His first achievements in this style was the famous Château Frontenac in Quebec City, drawn in 1890 after the outlines of a French sixteenth century château.⁴⁰ Château Frontenac, with its donjons and dormers, would become the prototype for a number of railway hotels in Canada, where the best known of them is still the Banff Springs Hotel, also designed by Price.⁴¹

In Montreal, Bruce Price is remembered not only for Victoria College, but also for the two stations he left us, Viger Station (which has since been renovated to accommodate the administration of the City of Montreal and is now known as the Jacques Viger Building) and Windsor Station. The Viger station and hotel complex had been built in the same style as the Château Frontenac: it was picturesque, somewhat exotic, colourful and while it was somewhat stiff-looking, it was highlighted by its setting on Viger Square. It was very representative of the propaganda architecture for which Price became so renowned and so much in demand at the end of his career.

He also built Windsor Station, which, with the old Toronto City Hall, built in 1890 according to the plans of Edward Jones Lennox, is the building which best reflects the influence of Richardson in Canada. Both buildings also constitute landmarks, for they signal the beginning of the growing

American influence on Canadian architecture to the detriment of the European influence.⁴² Both buildings seem to draw their inspiration from a building which did a lot to contribute to Richardson's reputation: the Allegheny County House in Pittsburgh which was completed in 1887. The connection is not without foundations, for Price would start construction on Windsor Station the very next year.

Windsor Station possesses the assurance of a Middle Age castle. It was completed by Architects Taylor, Watts and Painter. With its tower 16 storeys high, it was built - and later considerably enlarged - around a steel frame. Price used semicircular arches extending over three storeys, a fact which contributed in maintaining the building's unity of style during later enlargements, in spite of the difficulties presented by the pronounced unevenness of the site. This device had been successfully used by Richardson for his Marshall Field Wholesale Building in Chicago (1885-87). The use of rustic stones to lend vigour to the semicircular arches as well as to the arches of the windows on the floors above them add to the feeling of power and strength which characterize the station today and as conceived then by Price. To quote an observer of his time (1889):

The new station and general offices of the Canadian Pacific is in many respects one of the most interesting

buildings in the city. In it the common grey limestone of Montreal has been used with a truer perception of its character as a building material and with better effect than ever before. It has been given a texture which not only prevents it from being unpleasantly cold but is admirably suited to the size and power of the building it composes.⁴³

During subsequent enlargements, a large hall was added to the station: although not very high, it lends a feeling of spaciousness which is further enhanced by the light pouring in from the huge skylight. (Pl. 68)

Windsor Station is a natural ending for this chapter on public and religious architecture in Montreal during the Victorian era. Indeed, the era would be marked by the imprint of steel and steam and ultimately by the spirit of capitalism which was to erect the instruments and the symbols of its activities and of its power wherever it prevailed. Productivity, efficiency, profitability are all part of the capitalist way of imposing its demands and the latter would be sufficiently reflected in the commercial architecture of the day to warrant a chapter on that particular kind of architecture.

CHAPTER NINE

HOPES AND DISAPPOINTMENTS: COMMERCIAL ARCHITECTURE

We should never be able to perceive the real nature of the period from a study of public buildings, state residences, or great monuments. We must turn instead to an examination of humbler structures. It was in routine and entirely practical construction, and not in the Gothic or Classical revivals of the early nineteenth century, that the decisive events occurred, the events that led to the evolution of new potentialities. Sigfried Giedion.¹

1. Stone Skeletons

If commercial architecture in Montreal in the nineteenth century was sufficiently distinctive to warrant a separate chapter, the very title of this chapter seems to indicate that it was at first interesting, only to grow more disappointing as time went on. Why this happened, we intend to find out by looking at some of the structures still standing today, as other examples which may have been more appropriate have since disappeared. Indeed, these "practical constructions", to use Giedion's expressions, were very vulnerable, for their survival depended solely on their economic usefulness. As soon as their usefulness was outlived they would be torn down to make room for better economically-adapted buildings.

At its best, this commercial architecture may be described as a structural system of beams and pillars with the

austere "stone skeletons" of the façade separated by glass areas. One of the most interesting examples of this type of construction in Montreal is located at 417 rue des Récollets. As in the case of most buildings today, its façade has been disfigured by the presence of an emergency staircase; apart from this unfortunate feature, one is struck by the building's powerful simplicity, its good proportions and the quality of the copings. What is even more interesting is the fact that its inner structure of beams and pillars allows for an open plan on every floor and that its façade reflects this structure. This kind of architecture is very common today, but one must keep in mind the fact that this particular building was probably built in the early 1850's, at a time when architecture was still a slave to supporting partitions and walls as well as to historical styles. Both the structure and the design concepts of this building are reminiscent of the "architectural functionalism" hailed by Sullivan and picked up by Le Corbusier and his disciples in the twentieth century to form the basis for the "Mouvement moderne international": it was undoubtedly the archetype of our modern office buildings.² (Pl. 43)

In Montreal, a kind of commercial architecture exemplified by this building on rue des Récollets was both vigorous and audacious. It seemed like the spontaneous, logical and economic answer to commercial and industrial functions



43. Commercial building located at 417 des Récollets Street.



44. Commercial building located at 366-68 Notre-Dame west, now Bell-Rinfret Building.

45. The first sky-scraper built in Montreal, the New-York Life Insurance Co. Building: Badcock, Cook and Willard, arch.

46. Unity Building, completed in 1912.



which had thus far been unknown in the city, to such an extent at least. In earlier days, such functions, limited to local exchanges and handicrafts, were located on the ground-floor of traditional residences. However, with the division of tasks and cooperation in labor, with the gradual mechanization of the means of production and the considerable expansion of markets, these functions rapidly assumed a new character and were considerably enlarged. They became more specialized, more complex and put greater pressure on the demand for space. There was a need for unobstructed space which would be easily organized to accommodate a variety of functions like the manufacture of clothes, furniture, shoes or leather goods, all of which required various types of machines; to accommodate functions like wholesale trade or the stockpiling of goods; to house administrations with their increasingly defined and necessary operational functions. Builders answered these demands for space, with the open plan: a structure of beams and pillars offering a maximum of flexibility with a minimum of obstruction as well as plenty of natural light through glass façades. It was a clear, practical and unpretentious solution. It was good architecture, and even though it was not exclusive to the province of Quebec, it was one of the only authentic types of architecture in the province together with that of the traditional rural and urban dwellings which was so well adapted,

and of the sober industrial housing.

Unfortunately, we do not possess much information on this original and worthwhile commercial architecture in Montreal. We hardly know anything about the architects or builders of these buildings or even when they were built. This was to be expected, for it is difficult to become interested in an architecture which had no claims to being called by that name. At times, we may be fortunate enough to find an inscription like the one engraved on a cornerstone of a building located at the corner of d'Youville and St-Pierre and which reads: "Bâtisses des Soeurs Grises construites par E. Plante & Dubuc en 1871" (Building of the Grey Nuns built by E. Plante & Dubuc in 1871). In the face of a lack of evidence, we can only hypothesize as to where this revolutionary commercial architecture originated or why such architecturally advanced concepts were gradually forgotten and neglected, only to be rediscovered and appreciated late in the twentieth century.

This type of architecture seems to have originated on the American continent and more precisely in New England. Structures using cast-iron beams and pillars may be traced back to the mid-nineteenth century in Great Britain. However, this feature was not reflected in their façades, which were usually built in the traditional manner with supporting walls

made of masonry. The monolithic stonework skeleton was an American innovation and art historian Hitchcock traces its origin back to Boston and to the Quincy Market stores erected in 1824 by Architect Alexander Parris. During the same year, the stone skeleton structure was used for the construction of the Granite Block and of the Roger Williams Bank in Providence; some decades later, it was commonly found in several buildings in Philadelphia³. As the large cities on the American eastern seaboard became industrialized before the Canadian cities, it is quite probable that this type of commercial architecture appeared in these cities before crossing the border. Other influences may have also prevailed: it is quite possible that the military engineers of the King's army, stationed in Montreal, may have had some influence, for they had a practical and direct way of dealing with construction problem.

Whatever their origin may have been, the skeleton façades were particularly well suited to the construction of commercial buildings in the heart of the old town. Indeed, most of these buildings were erected on already densely built streets like St-Paul, Notre-Dame or St-Pierre, to replace more traditional structures which had been judged inadequate for the new functions. As most of the individual lots which had been cleared by demolition or by destruction - due to natural

causes or not - of the old buildings, were narrow and deep strips of land locked in between other buildings, the skeleton façade with its large glass windows was the only structure capable of providing enough natural light to such buildings which were often 90 to 100 feet deep and set between two blind common walls. Thus, the building located at civic numbers 7-9 on Notre-Dame Street West is about 100 feet deep by about 25 feet wide; yet, this building is not an exception. But for very slim columns, the space between the common walls of such buildings is free of any obstruction on every floor. We still possess some engravings depicting the interior arrangements of some of these buildings. The one published in the Canadian Illustrated News of November 21, 1874, on the interior of Privett's restaurant on the l'Hôpital Street, shows the kind of flexibility which is provided for by these structures.⁴ (Pl. 50)

Stone skeleton façades were not only applied to buildings which were locked in between common walls. They were also applied to some large autonomous structures such as the Sisters' Warehouse (1866) which had been built on a block bounded by St-Sulpice, St-Dizier, de Brésoles, Le Royer and St-Paul Streets⁵, and the Grey Nuns' Buildings erected in 1871 and 1874 on the block bounded by Normand, d'Youville, St-Pierre Streets and Youville Square. The architectural features of the façades were remarkable for the times. Strong

arcades braced the ground floor while powerful pillars of masonry rose above every third bay on the other floors, clearly reflecting the inner structure.⁶ These buildings already contained the main architectonic principles which would be at the origin of the success of the Chicago School at the end of the century. (Fig. 16)

The features of these façades lead us to another fundamental characteristic of this first attempt at commercial architecture in Montreal: not only are the stone skeleton façades a technical innovation, but they point to researches of a purely architectural nature in the realm of composition, proportion, articulation and scale. Unlike modern commercial buildings where all floors are identical and which generally look like a production line, these buildings were designed to be seen and appreciated by the passers-by on the street. Therefore the façades were usually vertically modulated, and the height of each floor gradually diminished towards the top of the building. This is obvious in the case of the building on rue des Récollets as well as in the case of other buildings like the ones located at 410 St-Vincent Street, 120 St-Paul East, 215, 221-231 St-Paul West and also the magnificent building at 438-442 Place Jacques-Cartier. (Pl. 48 & 49)

Even the roofs of these commercial buildings seem to have drawn the attention of the builders. When the building

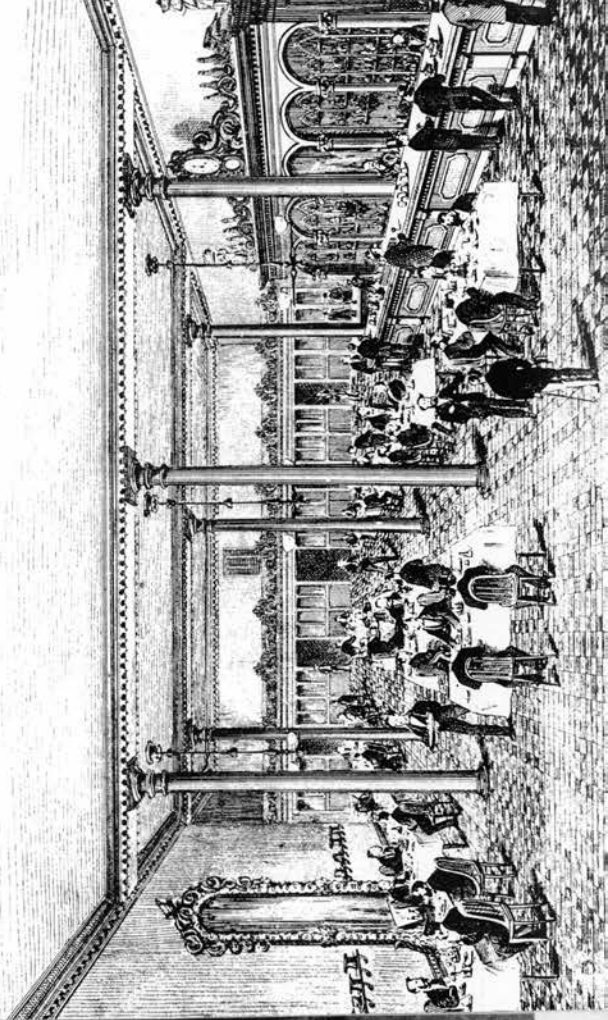


47. St-Paul Street, Old Montreal.



48 and 49. Façades with skeleton stonework.

50. The interior of Privett's restaurant,
de l'Hôpital Strêet.



was topped by a curb roof, strongly protruding dormers would highlight the fact. This appears to be so in the case of buildings on the east side of St-Pierre Street, between Youville Street and Youville Square. However, curb roofs represented a loss of space in a building where space meant money. The use of tar would permit the construction of flat roofs from the 1880's onwards and soon many curb roofs were to be replaced to create an additional floor. Yet, the buildings looked incomplete with flat roofs. The remedy suggested by architects and builders seems to have been the use of imposing cornices. This architectural solution had made its first appearance during the Italian Renaissance, and while it may not have been very original, it was nevertheless both effective and interesting as the Chicago School would prove. The previously mentioned building on Place Jacques-Cartier as well as those located at 430 Ste-Hélène Street, at 434 St-Pierre Street and among numerous others, those at 92-100 St-Paul East and 7-31 Notre-Dame West attest to this fact.

It would be a mistake to look at these buildings without considering the manner in which they are integrated with the streets on which they were erected. There is little doubt that the architects who designed them did attempt to integrate the façades into the "spectacle" of the Victorian street. Facing the Grey Nuns Building on St-Pierre Street the

same arcades on the ground floor with the same rhythmic pattern of pillars placed at every third bay impose a certain unity on the whole street, by imposing strong horizontal lines to its perspective. The same horizontal lines predominate in the case of buildings located at 7-39 Notre-Dame Street West. Otherwise, as in the case of the two buildings located at 215-231 St-Paul West, vertical lines predominate: powerful pillars rise uninterrupted from the sidewalk to the cornice. As they protrude against the glass windows, and cast long shadows, the these façades appear solid and blend well with the neighbouring buildings. The most striking example of emphasis on vertical lines is exemplified by the building located at 430 Ste-Hélène where the six storeys are vertically divided by uniform pillars into three thin strips which accentuate the soaring feeling the building conveys and create a link with the adjacent buildings. In other façades, neither vertical nor horizontal lines predominate and these façades appear like well-proportioned rectangles or squares of stones (120, St-Paul East; 374-84 St-Paul West; 367-73 Youville Square); elsewhere they appear like plain glass surfaces with a barely perceptible framework (47-55 des Commissaires West). In almost every case these stone skeleton façades seem to participate in the spectacle of the street either by integrating with the dominant lines and textures of the street or by running squarely against

these features of the street. (Pl. 47)

If the stone skeleton façades preceded metal-frame architecture, it is also reminiscent of the latter method of construction because it too involved the prefabrication of some of the building elements. There is so much affinity in the spirit of these two methods, that they are sometimes applied together to a same façade. However, we do not know for certain whether some elements of cast-iron or iron were originally combined with the stone framework of the façades or whether they replaced parts of the latter at a later date. The latter hypothesis is likely to apply in the case of a building located at 177-183 St-Paul Street East which was probably built in the early 1860's. The gable with its dormers suggests that its façade of stone and cast-iron may be the result of the alteration of a traditional stone course. Whatever its origin may be, this façade is remarkable and is probably amongst the most bare and most "glassed-in" of all the structures we have studied thus far. In fact, the ratio of glass-covered surfaces to constructed surfaces is so high that it may just surpass that of our modern skyscrapers. (Fig. 15)

Façades with stone frameworks were nevertheless predominant in Montreal's commercial architecture. Whereas in the United States the cast-iron frames would be very popular from 1850 to 1880 - St-Louis' business centre was probably the

best proof of this⁷ - cast-iron would seldom be applied to the façades of the Canadian metropolis. It is not known whether fear of the effects of the climate on the new material or apprehensions about the cost of prefabricated cast-iron elements are responsible for this fact. Yet, the use of stone in the creation of avant-garde architecture confirmed the preference of Montrealers for stone (available throughout the island) and reinforced the picture of a "Town built of stone" which had so much impressed Benjamin Silliman a few decades earlier.

2. The Italian Forms

It is very likely that the stone skeleton façades that we have just studied were not appreciated at the time they were built. They had been built for strictly commercial purposes and were regarded as utilitarian and without architectural pretensions. We are now in a better position to judge these buildings, for they were the forerunners of our contemporary architecture, which we have learned to appreciate for some of its qualities. Yet, for someone used to look upon architecture as the nostalgic image of the past and who is accustomed to appreciate the picturesque in architecture, the stone skeletons must have looked bare and without any interest. The romantics of the end of the nineteenth century certainly preferred Perrault's Post-Office and Brown's Molson Bank to the Grey Nuns' Building by the little known Plante and Dubuc. This reaction

must have influenced the merchants, bankers and insurance company heads for whom prestige was the cornerstone of success and who were particularly anxious to see their prestige expressed through the architecture of their office buildings. The building located at 445-49 St-Pierre Street is a case in point. The façade itself is made of a stone framework with all glass surfaces well cleared and, in general, the façade reflects the logic of the structural system. However, mouldings decorate the lintels, capitals enhance the pillars and crownings and triangular frontons cap the doors as well as some of the bays. Such ornaments are ill-conceived and the overall impression is ghastly, but one can feel the tendency to adapt the stone skeleton to the tastes of the day.

Luckily, an acceptable form of "dressing-up" this type of architecture would soon appear and would do away with the kind of monstrosity we have just described, to make way for a number of shapes and details borrowed from Italian Renaissance palace architecture. This type of commercial architecture "à l'italienne" flourished in the years 1840-60: Karsapian's Warehouse on Leeds Road in Bradford, with its Roman details, is a famous example. America would soon follow in Great Britain's footsteps, as we may see in Philadelphia.⁸ No matter how this influence reached Canada⁹, it would leave its mark on a number of buildings in Montreal; one of these

is the Rinfret Building (366-68 Notre-Dame West). This Italian style was not exclusive to commercial architecture: after the revival of Greek and Gothic architecture, it became the Victorian era's most important mode of architectural expression and had already started to influence religious architecture (neo-Baroque) in the province. (Pl. 44)

A closer look at the façade of the Rinfret Building tends to show that the Italian fashion was perhaps the best way of decorating the skeleton façades without damaging them too much. In the case of this building, the internal structure is still perceivable because the horizontal and vertical supports are still apparent: the arcade is here a simple ornament set between the supports. There is a slight loss of glass surface and of natural light inside the building, but this is compensated for by the freer articulation of the façade's various components and by the richness of its texture.

The decoration in the Italian manner makes the façades look more lively, which is more than one can say about the austere stone frames. When the articulation and liveliness of the various components are held in check by the very structure of the building, or when decoration is limited to an attempt at enhancing elements which reflect the internal structure of the building, this type of commercial architecture becomes rather interesting. There are several examples of

buildings of this type in Old Montreal where every street possesses at least one of these structures. While keeping in mind that the value of this kind of architecture lies in its honesty, one realizes that all these buildings are not equally worthwhile; indeed, many of them have been altered or disfigured in the most brutal manner. We would like to point to some of them, before they disappear under the plough of "progress". There is a building located on the north-east corner of St. James Street and Place d'Armes which was probably built around 1870 for the Life Association of Scotland. Three floors have been added since, to replace a rather original curb roof with arched dormers. Its façade reflects the main themes of the Italian style, with arched windows and with columns lending a vertical rhythm to the floors. One sour note, though: the proportion of glass surfaces is almost equivalent to that of plain surfaces, a fact which represents a regression compared to the stone skeleton previously analyzed.

Another building has attracted our attention, even though its ground-floor and its roof were poorly altered: it stands at the north-west corner of McGill and St-Maurice Streets. In this case, the columns themselves are enhanced thus lending both structural logic and texture to the façade. Such visual effects would evolve into strictly decorative motifs, without any reference to a logical structure. This

may be observed on the façade of the building located at the north-east corner of Notre-Dame and St-Jean Streets and particularly on the façade of the building located at 380-84 St. James Street West (Pub St-Jacques occupies the ground floor), where the columns are protruding and strictly decorative, lending this façade a rather Second-Empire look.

The search for the picturesque did not, alas, stop at the few examples we have just given. The streets of the old town are literally littered with nineteenth century commercial buildings the façades of which look like orgies of decorations, the unfortunate result of various blends of styles, with a predominance of Italian styles. In such cases, structural considerations as well as climatic conditions have been ignored: only the picturesque of the attire matters.

Three contiguous buildings located at 38-60 Notre-Dame Street West are a good example. Buildings of this type are often heavily pretentious, like the building erected on the south-west corner of Notre-Dame and St-François Xavier Streets and which was appropriately named the British Empire Building. Other buildings display extremely superficial, merely skin-deep textures. Many a Montrealer must have been struck by the look of the façade of a building located at 157 St-Paul Street West, in front of John Ostell's serious Customs House Building: it is covered with faked rustic stones the motifs

of which change with every floor. However, when it comes to decorative extravaganza, the building located at 451-57 on St-Pierre Street is unsurpassed. Its façade is so overloaded that it defies description: it may rival that of the most exalted Venetian palace.

In an age which prides itself of being rational, it is quite easy for us to criticize the style of some of these buildings: taken individually, many are in very poor taste. However, as a group, they do reflect the presumption, the vigour, the imagination and the creativity of the golden age of capitalism and free enterprise. One must see the rather short Ste-Hélène Street to grasp the essence of this dynamic period of the end of the nineteenth century. One should stand at the corner of Ste-Hélène and des Récollets and look around at the four corner buildings to participate in a rather unique experiment. It is the best spot to take the pulse of the commercial city of the last century.

On the north-east corner of these streets stands a building which does indeed mark the gap existing between the commercial architecture of the end of the century and that of the beginning, which was characterized by the stone skeleton façade. This original architecture was both revolutionary and logical and had managed to rid itself of the bonds of the styles of the past, which were ill-adapted to modern materials

and to new functions: it was now replaced by a heavy, powerful purposeful and complacent Italian Renaissance palace where all the progress achieved in the field of open plans and proper natural lighting was sacrificed on the altar of the Romantic mania for plagiarism. Built in 1870, it is one of the few commercial buildings of the time whose architect is known to us. William Thomas practised in Montreal from 1860 to 1890 and distinguished himself by his preference for the Italian styles which he handled quite well. Everything he built, though, whether palace-like buildings or residences - with the exception of his delicate neo-Gothic St. George's Church - tended to be massive, square and formal.¹⁰

3. The First High-Rises

The tragedy in the evolution of commercial architecture, in Montreal as elsewhere, is that it reverted to obsolete architectural concepts. This happened at the very time when the specialization of functions required more appropriate structures, and when new materials (e.g. structural steel) and new technical improvements (e.g. the elevator) enabled the building of such structures. There was a widening gap between technique and art, between construction and architecture. It is all the more unfortunate since open-plan buildings and façades based on a stone structural framework had already paved the way for a revival. We should compare, for

instance, the buildings of the Grey Nuns in the early 1870's with the strange construction of the Head Office of the Grand Trunk Company erected in 1900 at 360 McGill Street. The former is an open plan, enjoys maximum natural light and projects its functions on the outside. The latter was first conceived as a decor (perhaps Egyptian or Assyrian?); it is hard to reconcile its volumes with the expected functions, and natural light is sacrificed because the façades are decorated with all the architectural ornaments and motifs that one finds in a Dictionary of Art. One cannot be mistaken as to the purpose of the Grey Nuns Buildings, whereas the Grand Trunk Building could easily be a palace or a hotel, but hardly an office building. One is genuine, the other ambiguous. Indeed, this ambiguity and this emphasis on architectural style and visual concepts, to the detriment of functions and logic, are chiefly responsible for the poor reputation of Victorian architecture in Montreal, as elsewhere.

We can draw another comparison, this time between the old Customs House built in 1833 by John Ostell and the gigantic eight-storey block (131 feet by 410 feet) of the new Customs House started in 1912 and occupying the whole block bounded by Place d'Youville, Normand Street, Youville Street and McGill Street. A whole century separates the two buildings, during which time new techniques and new materials appeared

which required new forms of expression. From the standpoint of architecture, however, there is no basic difference between these two Customs buildings, except their scale. We must remember that John Ostell's purpose was to display his mastery of classical themes. The architects of the new Customs House seem to have entertained the same hopes. The use of steel and concrete does not alter the fact that this 1912 structure is an old-fashioned frame in an ill-fitting "Beaux-Arts" attire. John Ostell had but little choice in the means at his disposal; the architects of the new Customs House had the opportunity to construct a building much more in keeping with its functions. Unfortunately, they remained enslaved to an architectural vision which had inspired Ostell some hundred years earlier.

One must not conclude that commercial architecture at the turn of the century is all poor. It has, indeed, left us a few good structures and we shall analyze them in due course. Yet, as a whole, it is disappointing. Let us consider, for example, the first high-rise built in Montreal - the New York Life Insurance Company Building (today the Société de Fiducie du Québec) erected in 1887 by Architects Badcock, Cook and Willard, on Place d'Armes at the south-east corner of St. James Street. It was the first eight-storey commercial building in Montreal; it was somewhat symbolic for no commercial building, until then, had ever risen beyond the five or

six storey mark (in fact, never beyond the number of flights that customers would be willing to climb) because of the lack of adequate vertical conveyance. In 1850, a safe passenger elevator designed in the United States was to radically change the picture. At the end of the century, Gustave Eiffel with his Tower, and Contamin and Dutert with their Galerie du Machines (structures erected for the 1889 International Exhibition in Paris) were demonstrating the potentialities of structural iron; while William Le Baron Jenney in Chicago was discovering (with the Leiter Building in 1889) the first clear and logical answers to the construction of iron-structured high-rises. The first Montreal high-rise therefore appeared rather conservative for its time. Though steel had been used for its floors and roofs, its supporting walls, 32 to 40 inches thick, were still made of masonry and carried the weight of the floors on each storey. In this respect, the previous buildings with their structure of beams and columns and their façades of monolithic structural stone frames were, once more, much ahead of their time.¹¹ (Pl. 45)

The gradual use of new methods of construction such as concrete or steel skeletons, however, was not going to save commercial architecture from its apathy and mediocrity, for the academic concepts which had inspired the New York Life Insurance Building in 1887 were going to prevail unabatingly

until the 1930's. There are many examples to confirm this statement, ranging from the Canada Cement Building on Phillips Square, to Dominion Square Building with its Atlantic City flavour, and the Bell Telephone Building on Beaver Hall Hill, designed by Architect Barott. The stubborn affection for the picturesque and for an obsolete symbolism at the expense of a more contemporary approach to architecture is even better demonstrated by two other high-rises: the Royal Bank of Canada Building - which covers the whole surface of the block bounded by Notre-Dame, St-Pierre, St-Jacques, and Dollard Streets - and the Sun Life Building on Dominion Square.

The Royal Bank Building was erected in 1928 by Architects York and Sawyer. Its monumental ground floor, in the manner of a Florentine palace of the Renaissance makes it quite conspicuous and confirms the triumph of mercantile classicism in Montreal. This elegant ground floor serves as a base to support a dull and massive tower but there is no real connection between the two volumes; it simply reflects a municipal regulation which then limited the height of office buildings to 110 feet above which further floors had to be recessed.¹² The Sun Life Building was built along the same lines but in different stages. In the late 1920's, during the last stage, the present tower was added by Architects Darling and Pearson, thus making it the highest and the largest office complex in

all of the British Empire. Its steel skeleton is covered with Stanstead granite, a beautiful material. It was hailed at the time as the most impressive and the most ornate of all the new buildings in the city - but certainly not the most novel. It is undoubtedly an impressive mass enhanced by its location right in front of the magnificent Dominion Square. It has monumental Corinthian columns on the ground floor, parapets on the roofs, and a colonnade running from the 17th to the 19th floor (in the manner of Perrault in the Louvre): all these are picturesque features which were already obsolete at the time. By comparison, the Aldred Building is much more modern. It was built by Architects Barott and Blackader at about the same time as the additions made to the Sun Life Building.¹³ Almost as high as the latter or as the Royal Bank, it is definitely more contemporary in the architectural expression of its volumes which reflects the structural system and the function of the building. Unfortunately, its many recessed volumes would be better suited to a high-rise with a floor area three or four times larger, as in the case of the Palmolive Building in Chicago which may perhaps have inspired the architects of the Aldred.

Fortunately, the commercial buildings of the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century did not all follow the style of the Sun Life, the Royal Bank

or the Canadian Bank of Commerce (built in 1907 on St. James Street by Darling and Pearson) which remained slaves to the academies. Some buildings were spared the eclectic disguise such as the Jacobs Building at the corner of St. Catherine and St. Alexander, a seven-storey concrete building covered with varnished tiles, erected in 1909. It somehow resembles the Leiter II Building of Le Baron Jenney in Chicago. Built in the same spirit, the Ogilvy Department Store at the corner of Ste-Catherine and de la Montagne has a steel structure and concrete floors; it is framed on the façade by a monumental arch rhythmically structured. Finally, another building located on the north side of Ste-Catherine Street, west of Drummond, also reflects the influence of the Chicago School. However, it is Unity Building, completed in 1912, on the southwest corner of La Gauchetière and St. Alexander Street which, except for the ornaments, is the most reminiscent of the Chicago commercial architectural style, for it resembles what may be considered as Henry Sullivan's most striking high-rises; the Wainwright Building in St. Louis (1890) and the Guaranty Building in Buffalo (1894).

The construction of the Royal Bank and the Aldred deprived the Church of Notre-Dame of its title and prestige as the highest building in Montreal, at the same time as the Sun Life cast its shadow over the dome of St. James Cathedral.

In the span of a few decades, Montreal has become a powerful commercial and industrial city, a fact confirmed by the number of high-rises. In the course of this very rapid transformation, however, the city has lost many of the environmental qualities it had gradually acquired during the two first centuries of its existence. For the pre-industrial town had left behind the imprints of some form of organic planning with its perfect hierarchy of social functions translated into structures that were physically identifiable within the urban framework. The Church of Notre-Dame towered over the city, the Court House bordered the Champ-de-Mars, while the Château de Ramezay and the Château de Vaudreuil were connected to the urban fabric by their gardens which acted as a buffer zone. In every case there seems to have been a concern for the setting of a building and for the meaning of assumed in the general context of the town; this even applied to the humble private dwellings. This humanized concept of urban space has tragically disappeared from the industrial town. Space is no longer perceived as the orderly reflection of a way of living governed by cultural and social ideals but as a means of exchange and a common consumer good.

This downgrading of the quality of urban space in the commercial downtown area follows two different consecutive patterns: first, the available space was fully utilized; then,

there followed a period of vertical construction. At first commercial buildings expanded horizontally to compensate for their inability to rise upwards for lack of efficient means of vertical transport; they infiltrated everywhere, occupying every available space, swallowing up green areas and public land, and only stopping at the street because they found it practical to do so. It is not surprising then that these commercial functions should have dislodged most of the other functions on Co-teau St-Louis. In fact, they simply dislodged them without changing anything in the existing structures, i.e. the existing grid of streets. This explains why the streets planned by Dollier de Casson, to service a low density residential settlement, were converted into narrow corridors completely out of the sun's reach. It was "Wall Street" revisited. Then, with the invention of the elevator and all the modern techniques in the fields of construction, heating, and ventilation, the reverse phenomenon took place: high-rise syphoned up their immediate neighbourhood, creating vacuums around them; they dismantled the urban space, transforming the downtown area into an asparagus field. More about this phenomenon later, for it really belongs to our own time rather than to the Victorian era.

4. The Grain Elevators and Victoria Bridge

We could hardly conclude this chapter on Victorian commercial architecture in Montreal without a few words about

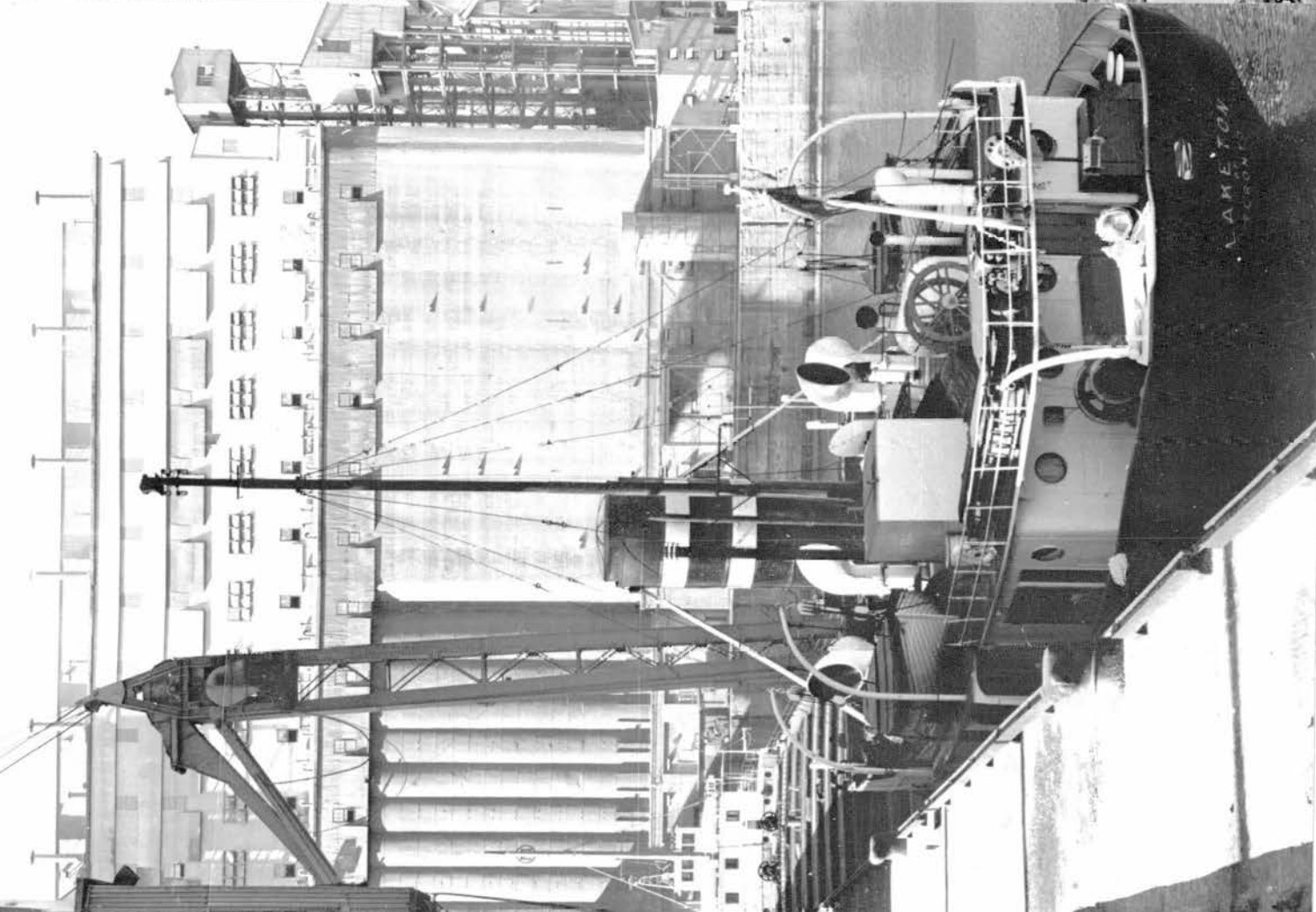
the bridge, named specifically after Queen Victoria, and about the grain elevators, for these are characteristic monuments of that period. Victoria Bridge was under construction from 1854 to 1859 and was to undergo transformations after 1897. It was the first bridge to cross the wide St. Lawrence River and it aroused the same feeling of awe that had accompanied the first railways a few decades earlier. Indeed, at the time of its inauguration, this bridge was considered the greatest scientific achievement - the eighth wonder - of the world. As for the grain elevators, they are remarkable for the complexity of their operation which is expressed in a variety of forms, from the geometrical shapes of the silos to the linear dynamics of the conveyors.

The new construction techniques and materials developed during the Victorian era had a definite impact on those structures. For example, Elevator number 2 erected in 1912 for the Harbour Commission, by the engineers of John S. Metcalf, was the first of its kind to be built of concrete; it is 457 feet long, 100 feet wide, and 200 feet high, with a capacity of 2,662,000 bushels; it is a purely functional mass, visually out of scale in relation to the buildings of Old Montreal and it steals the limelight from the nearby Bonsecours Market, besides completely cutting the view of the river.¹⁴ Those elevators are perfectly anonymous and without pretensions

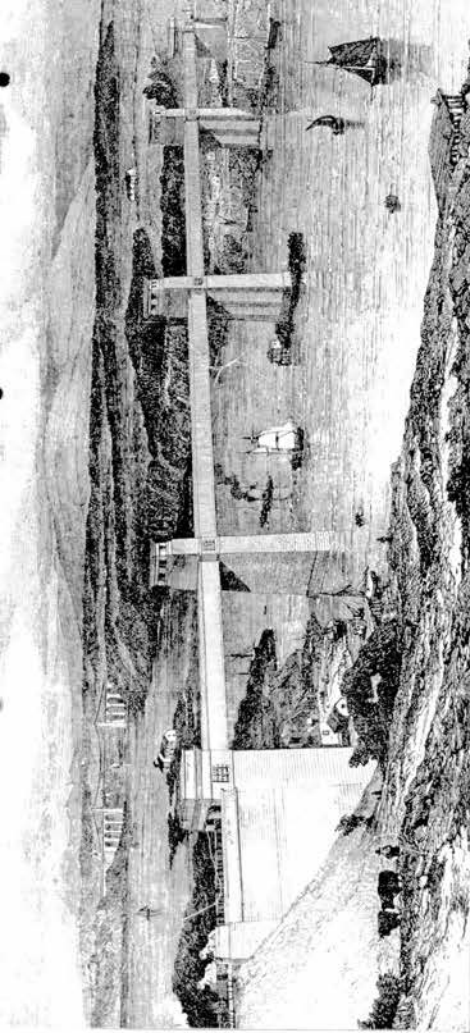
of any kind; they do not even bear names but simply numbers (elevator number 1, number 2, number 3, etc.) and they are connected to the quays, and sometimes to each other, by conveyors operating high in the air. For those able to appreciate them they are marvellous pieces of functional architecture. Since they are strictly functional they confirm a principle dear to modern architecture, i.e. form follows function. Seldom has cybernetic architecture been better heralded than by those huge tentatular structures hovering above the quays like octupuses. They have even been a source of inspiration for formal architecture and Le Corbusier was one of the first architects to admire and perceive the design potential behind those austere structures. Already in 1925, he had included photographs of the grain elevators of Montreal in an important book he wrote, entitled Vers une architecture.¹⁵ (Pl. 51)

Victoria Bridge was also, at the time of its inauguration, a striking example of the potentialities of the new techniques and materials. Unfortunately, from a strictly architectural point of view, it was a failure which can for a large part be blamed on the cultural dependency of the colony on the mother country.

To build this bridge over the St. Lawrence, the Grand Trunk Company had commissioned the great British Engineer, Robert Stephenson, the son of George Stephenson, the "father

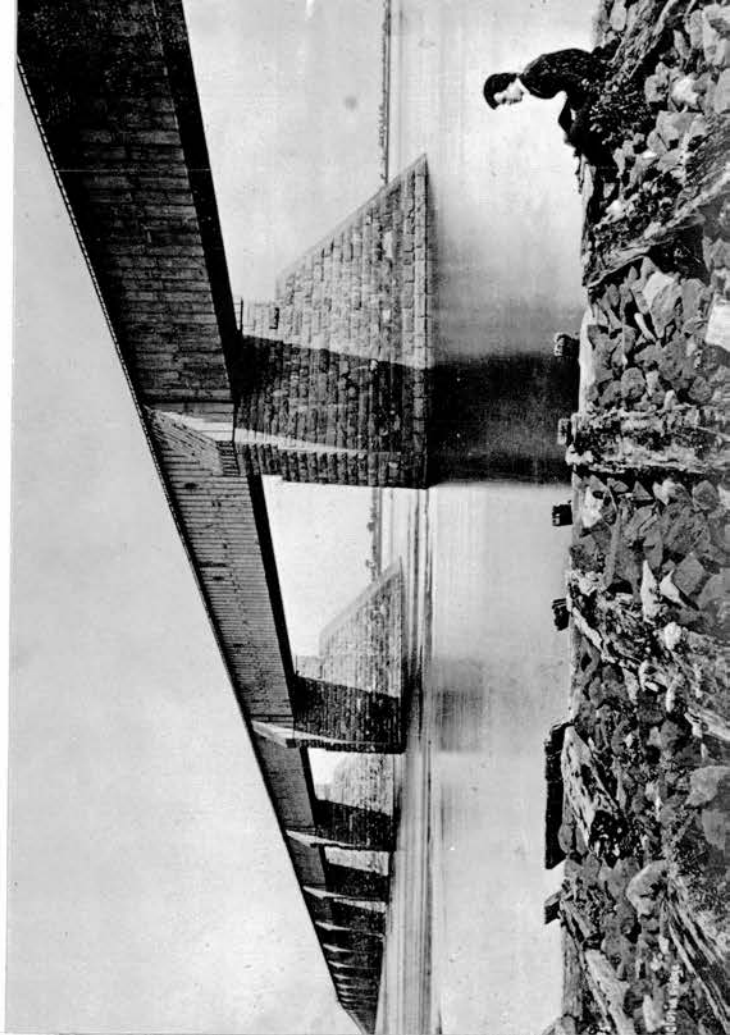


51. The grain elevators on the harbour.



52. Britannia Bridge, Menai Strait. Robert Stephenson, ing. and Francis Thompson arch., 1845-50.

53. Victoria Bridge around 1878. Robert Stephenson, ing., 1854-60.



of the railways". Robert had acquired a considerable reputation for having constructed the famous Britannia Railway Bridge (1845-50) after three years of research in the laboratory.

This bridge, across Menai Strait, joined the island of Anglesey to Wales; it was remarkable for its tubular structure, for the maturity of its design and for its pure and simple lines.

Credit is also due to Francis Thompson, a talented architect who had joined Stephenson in this venture. Britannia Bridge was essentially based on two structural rectangular tubes made of wrought-iron plates riveted to each other; they were reinforced at the floor and at the roof by I-beams and supported between the two shores of Menai Strait by three geometrically designed masonry pillars.

Stephenson used the same tubular structure for Victoria Bridge; but while the latter could be considered as "the greatest and boldest civil engineering feat of the early Victorian era"¹⁶ and also as the most beautiful bridge of the beginning of the present era, Victoria Bridge, though a remarkable piece of engineering, unfortunately did not possess the qualities which turned Britannia Bridge into a piece of art. This is mainly due to the fact that a structure perfectly suited to the site of Menai Strait was adopted without any alteration for a completely different site. Another reason is that in this case, Robert Stephenson had not benefited from the

precious collaboration of a man like Thompson.

Menai Strait filled all the prerequisites for a harmonious relationship between the steep shores of the strait, the vertical volumes of the pillars, and the horizontal lines of the bridge; the place selected for the bridge, on the banks of the St. Lawrence, was exceedingly flat and the river thus looked more like a lake than like a waterway. At Menai Strait, the distance to be covered was short and the site very dramatic: the total length of the bridge between the entrance gates - signalled by two huge lions carved out of stone - was 1500 feet. The distance was covered by four spans; the two main spans, measured 463 feet, and the tubes themselves were suspended some 100 feet above the high tide waters.¹⁷ In the case of the Montreal Bridge, the length of the tube was more than four times that of the Britannia, i.e. about 6,600 feet, while the total length of the bridge, including the access ramps, was 9,184 feet. The distance between the two abutments was covered by 25 spans each of them measuring 242 feet (except for the central one which measured 330 feet), and the elevation of the tube above the water, at the highest point under the central span, was exactly 60 feet.

The harmonious propositions of the Britannia were evidently not duplicated in the Victoria Bridge, for here one dimension definitely prevailed over the others: its seemingly

endless length. And to extend this linear aspect even further, contrary to the Britannia which had two tubes side by side, Victoria Bridge had only one tube (18 feet by 25 feet) with only one railway track running inside it. So, in spite of the wish expressed by the officials of the Grand Trunk Company who had wanted to provide their railway with a bridge "of the best and most substantial character", only the pillars made of black limestone had some character for they were indeed adapted to the local conditions. They were provided with a sharp edge facing the current in order to break the drifting ice during the spring thaw. Yet, their masonry, as well as that of the abutments, did not have the distinction, discretion, or ingenuity of the Britannia's masonry. (Pl. 52 & 53)

Such a monumental task, the greatest venture in the world at the time, had indeed caught the eyes of the whole world. Yet, the overall impression conveyed was everywhere the same: the principal merit of Victoria Bridge seems to have been its length. These impressions have been very well summed up by a certain Monsieur de Lamothe:

Disons-le tout de suite, cette merveille de l'art des ingénieurs impressionne plus vivement l'esprit que la vue, car la distance en réduit étrangement les gigantesques proportions. La longue ligne rigide de la galerie, les formes grêles et également rectilignes des arches vues de face lui donnent de loin

l'humble apparence d'un pont
de chevalets.¹⁸

New York's Brooklyn Bridge designed by Roebling Enrigneers would show the world what original results could be achieved in the States by local talents using their own imagination.¹⁹

In front of the overwhelming size of structures like Elevator number 1, which, with a capacity of four million bushels was at the time the largest port elevator in the world, in front of Victoria Bridge, which, in spite of its "humble apparence d'un pont de chevalets" was still the longest bridge in the world, one cannot help but draw comparisons with what Geddes and Mumford have called the Paleotechnic era which is indeed characterized by gigantiness, a conquering spirit, ruthlessness, lack of respect for human values, and a devotion to power and money. Thus, those elevators crushed - and are still crushing - the old city with their mass, depriving it of any view or access to the river which was once upon a time its *raison d'être* and the charm of its site. Thus, Victoria Bridge, which had cost the lives of 26 people during its construction, crossed one of the most beautiful rivers in the world without providing the slightest chance of admiring it. Like a cave, the tube was totally dark inside - "an Egyptian darkness" according to one witness! - with, from time to time, a few tiny openings through which the odd ray of light would filter.

Moreover, the tube retained smoke, noise, and vibrations, at the expense of the passengers' comfort. On the day of its inauguration, August 25th, 1860, Prince Albert Edward (the future Edward VII) and the officials who were attending the ceremony were almost suffocated by the smoke blown by the locomotive.²⁰

CHAPTER TEN

FROM EXTRAVAGANCE TO INDIGENCE: DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE

Si l'on veut retracer l'évolution d'une authentique architecture moderne au Québec au cours de la seconde partie du XIXe siècle et de la première moitié du XXe, c'est dans les rues qu'il faut la chercher.
Melvin Charney.¹

1. The Residences of the Rich

Domestic architecture is not only one of the most authentic reflections of the ideals of an era but also the faithful mirror of the social and economic conditions of a population. The rich have always been able to follow the fashion in the way they dress as well as in their choice of residences, while the poor have had to make do with the type of shelter their limited income could provide. Thus, Victorian Montreal is divided into two distinct areas: the rich areas and municipalities encroaching on the hillsides of Mount Royal and the poor areas and municipalities spread out on the Lower Terrace and in the "East End" of the metropolis. However, the distinction between rich and poor areas in Montreal is not limited as in most towns, to a mere difference between social classes and incomes. Differences in ethnic origins add another variable to the picture: the rich areas are mainly populated by anglophones and the poor mainly by francophones. Domestic

architecture, as we shall see, reflects the differences between "having" and "being".

In the rich areas, the type of housing varies with the state of one's fortune, not to mention extravagances such as the Hispano-Moorish residence at 1374 Pine Avenue. In the poor areas, an original type of housing did eventually develop, but only through a long process of evolution. Upon careful inspection, one may uncover here and there buildings inspired by foreign models, whether English, American, Russian, Ukrainian or other. They are discreet witnesses to the cosmopolitan character of the metropolis. The amazing wooden residence on the south-east corner of de Bullion and de la Gauchetière Streets is a good example of this phenomenon.

We chose to leave aside those particular cases in favour of a global vision of domestic architecture in the past century. This vision rests on the basic assumption that the residences of the rich reflect primarily the pretentious and the cultural imitations of a privileged colonial class and that housing in the underprivileged classes reflects an adjustment - most of the time compulsory - to social and economic realities. We shall begin with the study of the first type, for it is the easiest to analyze as it espouses all the styles and fashions we have already identified in the study of our public and religious architecture, namely: neo-classical,

neo-Gothic, Picturesque or Shaw's style.

A look at the residences selected by the privileged of that time - the big landowners, bank presidents, industry, shipping and railway magnates - would reveal the main features of those types of residences. In the days of Queen Victoria, they were all gathered in a restricted and exclusive perimeter, on the territory where merchants of the XIXth century, like McGill, McTavish and other fur magnates had helped themselves to aristocratic estates. Later on, under the pressure of urban development, this perimeter was somewhat dismantled and extended along a south-east axis making certain avenues like Dorchester and Sherbrooke as well as towards the mountain. Around 1900, a large number of interesting, palace-like residences were located between Sherbrooke Street and the side of Mount Royal and between Côte-des-Neiges Road and Bleury Street. At the time about 70% of Canada's wealth was in the hands of the 25,000 odd residents of this territory, measuring approximately one square mile, a fact for which it earned the name "Golden Square Mile". Today, all that remains of the past glory of the original Square Mile lies in the fate of McGregor Avenue which is now Montreal's Consulate Row.

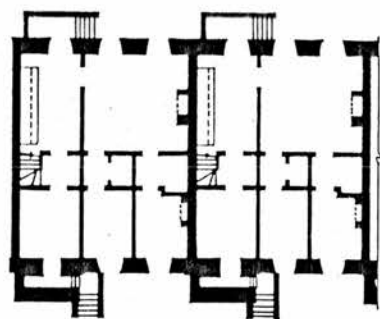
Stephen Leacock, in his usual incisive language, has left a penetrating picture of this Square Mile, the abode of the "Sirs", "Lords" and the moneyed, lower-ranking nobility.

He describes it as the sanctuary of the hypocritical Victorian virtue: quiet as a cloister, with elms turning every street into a Gothic cathedral, where summer never came to an end in the large private greenhouses, where private collections of paintings such as the collection of William Cornelius Van Horne were the envy of museums around the world, and where "the rich in Montreal enjoyed a prestige in that era that not even the rich deserve".² At the top of this sacred territory stood Ravenscrag, the pompous residence of the richest of the parvenus of the Square Mile, Sir High Montagu Allan.³ New York had its Vanderbilts, Philadelphia its millionaires from Rittenhouse Square; Montreal was now entitled to have its Allans, as this era of steam and iron had scummed its bath of sweat, poverty and squalor to create the fortunes of the few.

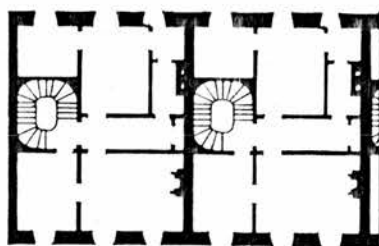
It might have been appropriate to start our tour of the Square Mile with a look at Prince of Wales Terrace. Unfortunately, these rows of residences, located on Sherbrooke Street West, at the north-west corner of McTavish Street, have recently been pulled down (in the fall of 1971). There was nobody there to protest such an act of vandalism which was perpetrated with the blessing of the university authorities. Yet, among the neo-classical row-houses of this type found in Canada, mainly in Quebec City, Kingston and Hamilton, Prince of Wales Terrace stood out for its dignified grandeur, its

well-balanced appearance and its sober taste, inside as well as outside. Less opulent and more severe looking, it was reminiscent of the style of John Nash in London, while the use of freestone for the façade and the austerity of the design was more reminiscent of the classical mansions in Edinburgh. They were built in 1859-60 for speculative purposes and commissioned by Sir George Simpson, who was then Governor of the Hudson Bay Company. They were designed by two talented architects: William Footner, whose fame rested mainly with Bonsecours Market and George Brown who designed the Molson Bank as well as other buildings.⁴ (Fig. 11)

Remarkable as the architectural qualities of these neo-classical residences may have been at the time they were built, they must have appeared slightly behind the architectural trends of the second half of the nineteenth century. One building which is more representative of this period is the solid, red brick house with apertures set in stonework, which is located at 3015 Trafalgar Avenue and known as Trafalgar House. The name of Trafalgar, by which several streets in the neighbourhood are called, comes from Trafalgar Farm. This land was formerly part of a farm owned by John Ogilvy who had called it Trafalgar Farm in memory of Admiral Nelson for whom he professed the greatest admiration. This splendid residence was built in 1848, as indicated on the carved stone above the door, and it



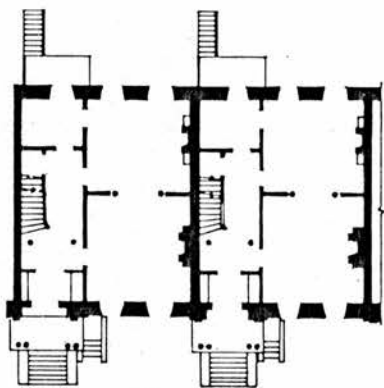
SOUS-SOL



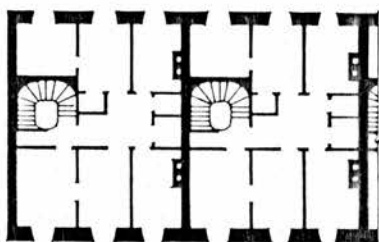
PREMIER PLANCHER



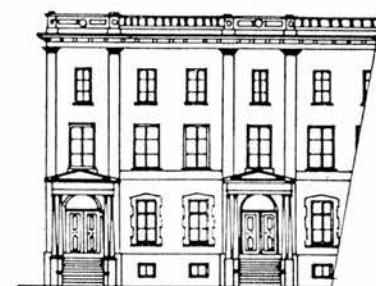
VUE ARRIÈRE



REZ-DE-CHAUSSÉE



DEUXIÈME PLANCHER

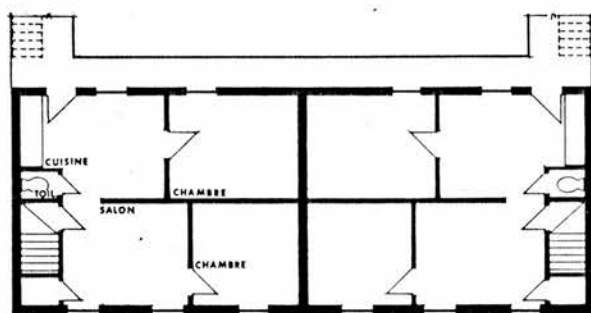


VUE AVANT

ÉCHELLE
1" = 20'0"

Fig. 11 Prince of Wales Terrace. William Footner and George Brown, arch., 1859-60.

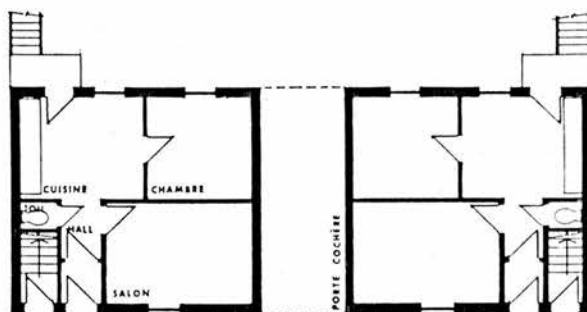
Fig. 12 Typical house on Ontario terrace, end of 19th century.



PREMIER ÉTAGE



VUE ARRIÈRE



REZ-DE-CHAUSSÉE

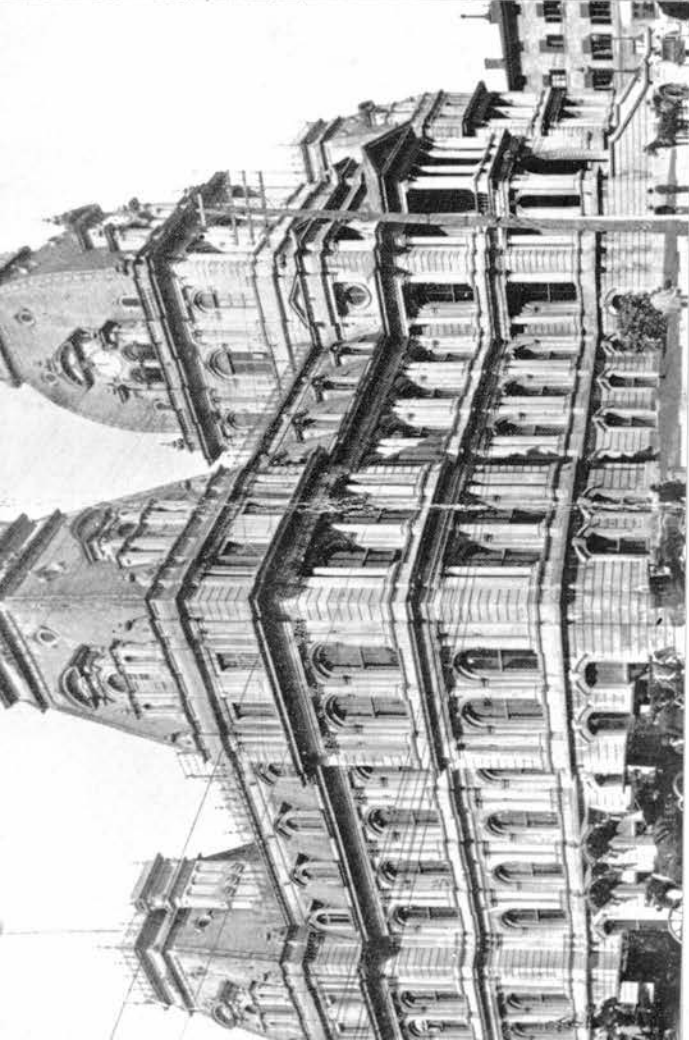


VUE AVANT

ADRESSE ÉCHELLE
2094 / 2108 MONTCALM
MONTREAL 1" = 10'0"

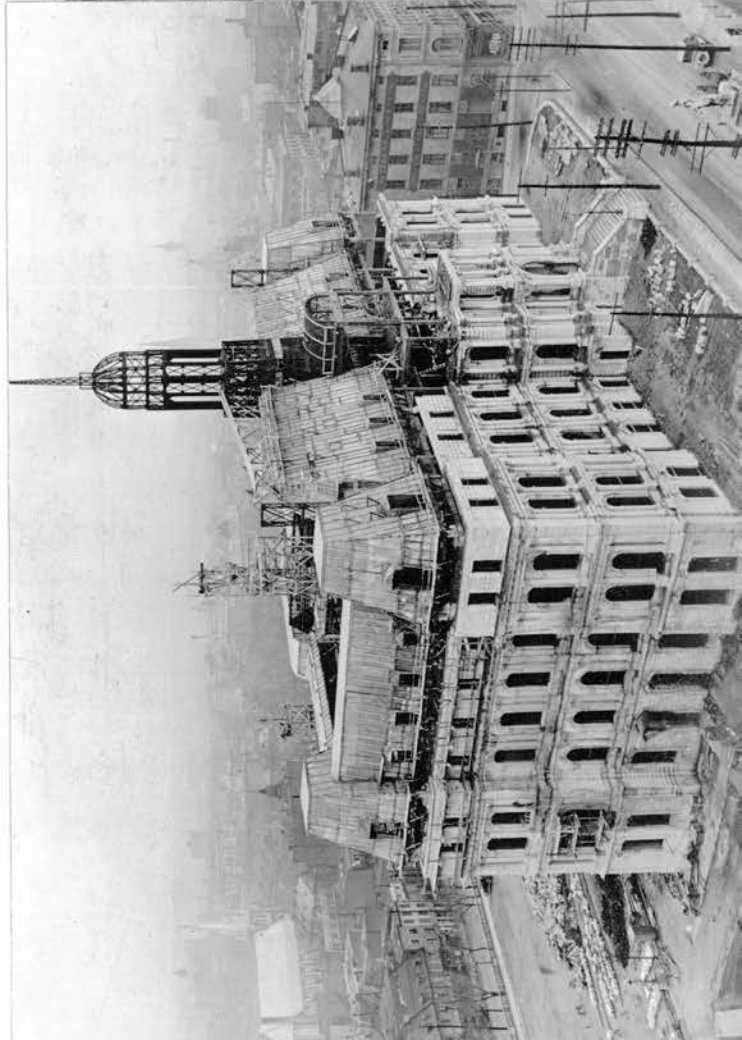
was designed by Toronto Architect John George Howard. He was an excellent draughtsman as well as an engineer and after emigrating from England, he practised mainly in English Canada, where he was at one time teacher of design at Upper Canada College. As an architect, he started with delightful residences in Regency style, but he soon decided to join the neo-Gothic and the Picturesque movements for he had a very alert mind and always eager to experiment. He designed the Toronto Prison in the neo-Gothic style; it was inaugurated in 1840. He also designed the Old Arts Building at Bishop's University in Lennoxville, which shows almost the same characteristics as Trafalgar House. The latter is remarkable for the feeling of solidity it conveys, its interesting blend of Gothic and Tudor features and for the quality of its construction. Unfortunately, the interior, where the walls of some rooms were upholstered with leather, has been ruined for lack of care and utter misuse of some of the rooms.⁵ (Pl. 56)

The enthousiasm for the neo-Gothic which resulted in some valid religious buildings such as St. Patrick's Church, Christ Church and St. George's Church left us few domestic structures. Interest in neo-Gothic was probably on the wane at the time private wealth became well established. Whatever the case, the return to the Renaissance in architecture, especially to the Italian Renaissance, was undeniably an ideal



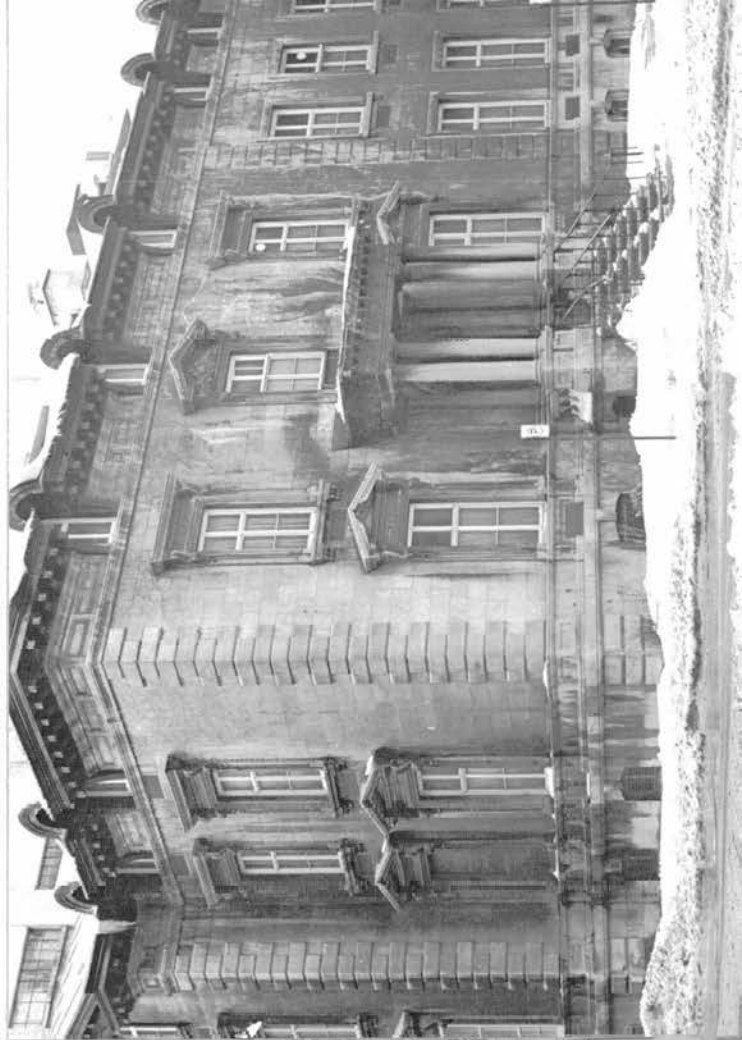
54. Montreal City-Hall. H.-Maurice Perrault, arch., 1872-78.

55. Montreal City-Hall under reconstruction in 1923.



56. Trafalgar House. John George Howard, arch., 1848.

57. The Engineers' Club, Beaver Hall Square. William T. Thomas, arch.



answer to the ambitions of the rich merchants and industrialists.

Architect William T. Thomas, whom we mentioned in the previous chapter, and, who is responsible for the large commercial palace on Ste-Hélène Street, built his reputation with the construction of this kind of opulent, upper-middle-class residence. He designed more than a dozen of these but most of them are gone today, including the residence of George Washington Stephens (originally at 363 Dorchester). It was built in 1867 and showed some interesting imitations of the Roman and Florentine palaces of the Renaissance. Of Thomas' domestic structures still existing today, there is a residence now occupied by the Engineers' Club on Beaver Hall Square which no Montrealer should miss. It was probably erected around 1860 for it appears on a map of the city printed in 1872; however, it seems to have been enlarged in the meantime. While years have not altered its scale nor its Italian opulence, they have considerably changed its environment. Today this aristocratic mansion is completely surrounded by high buildings and it no longer cuts a very impressive figure. Lord Mount Stephen House, at 1440 Drummond Street, now occupied by the Mount Stephen Club, is perhaps not as elegant but of all the classical residences designed by Thomas it is the most opulent, the most impressive and the richest. Inside, the central staircase is made of mahogany, the mantle pieces of marble and onyx, the

panelling of precious wood; the doorknobs are plated with 22 carat gold, and so on. Notman, the great Montreal photographer of the end of the century, has left us some splendid photographs of the drawing-rooms and of the greenhouse of this residence.⁶ In accordance with the taste of the times, the features of architecture literally disappear under a mass of paintings, vases, trinkets and bric-à-brac. Built around 1880, this mansion gives us a fair idea of the opulence and extravagant tastes of the ruling class of Montreal barely a hundred years ago.⁷ (Pl. 57)

These mansions were among the true examples of their style, for, in spite of their heavy aspect they retain an air of dignity which was probably not very common in this well-to-do neighbourhood. We need only look at the huge building on the north-west corner of McGregor Avenue and Drummond Street, the former residence of Charles Hosmer, a director of the Bank of Montreal and of the Canadian Pacific. Probably built around 1905-1906 in a pretentious style reminiscent of the Second Empire, it is a showpiece of excessive wealth. The lavish use of brown stone does not make the building appear any lighter - on the contrary. We cannot help but think of Mumford's "Brown Decades", and of the meaning he attached to the use of brown stone as a symbol of the fall: the fall of an art which has lost the freshness of spring and the vigour

of summer.⁸ In every respect, this house is oppressive, it is out of scale and its architecture is completely alien to the splendor of the surrounding site. In fact, it reflects the deep lack of confidence of this class of parvenus in their own artistic taste; they always appear ready to barter original and creative solutions in exchange for safe and reassuring values, and to despise the suggestions of their environment - the better to welcome foreign influences, whether European or American.

This very Victorian tendency to show off, to boast in public about success or money and to cling to the familiar values of styles belonging to the past found its ideal vehicle in the Picturesque. There are several residences in this style within the Square Mile. They have a well-fed, pretentious look about them, but no definite style of their own in spite of their contribution to "image architecture" - which is really what "Picturesque" architecture is all about. It is surprising exciting, thrilling ... and eventually tiring! There was, at one time, a house belonging to Senator George Drummond. It was a large mansion of red stone built in 1889. Its architect, Sir Andrew Taylor, had designed it to convey the feeling of some haunted manor in Scotland. Here is how a visitor describes it at the time:

The general design of the house

is strong and good. The strong corner tower, which is still the tower of a house not of a fortress, and the two gables rising steeply to the grotesque "beastes" that terminate them, produce a most admirable effect in the mass.⁹

This house, originally located on Sherbrooke Street West, almost in front of Prince of Wales Terrace, has since disappeared. "Ravenscrag" was the former residence of Sir Hugh Allan, a man who had made the largest fortune ever made before by a Canadian. Its site, towering over the McTavish reservoir, is quite exceptional and conveys a feeling of power, of mystery and of legend. The house itself, which was perhaps inspired by the "Ravenscrag" of the Marquess of Lorne, in Ayrshire, Scotland, it is a mixture of rather indefinite forms with most of its features borrowed from the Italian Renaissance. While we are still discussing the Picturesque, there is a little masterpiece of a kind, combining English "bay-windows" with Dutch gables and turrets dear to heart of Viollet le Duc: the house located at 438 Sherbrooke Street East which is now occupied by the Canadian Club. There is another reason to mention the existence of this house: it used to be the home of the Dandurand family, the first family in Montreal to own an automobile ... an omen of the deep transformation of the urban environment.

As for the interior of these sumptuous mansions,

we need not describe them here for everyone has probably had a chance as a child to visit grandparents or friends of the latter, and experience the hushed and easy atmosphere of those large rooms overcrowded with furniture and ornaments and whose worst enemies were simplicity and sunlight. As Lewis Mumford pertinently puts it: "no house was thought fit to live in that did not contain truck loads of ornament and bric-à-brac."¹⁰

Aside from the Picturesque, several residences built at the turn of the century reveal the influence of the Beaux-Arts style. There is a parallel between the delightful library of St-Sulpice, by Eugene Payette and the residence at 430 Sherbrooke Street East; its façade is one of the most harmonious on this long street. Another dwelling on Sherbrooke Street belongs to the same kind of style though it is more pretentious; it used to be the private residence of Sir Hugh Graham, then owner of the Montreal Star; it is located at the southwest corner of Sherbrooke and Stanley Streets. The Mortimer B. Davis House (now Arthur Purvis Memorial Hall, McGill University) was even more monumental, more austere and classical. It was built at the beginning of the century on the south-east corner of Pine Avenue and Peel Street, one of the most privileged sites of Montreal. We have here a perfect example of the cool balance and the well-calculated symmetry of the Beaux-Arts style. We know of only one residence (in fact, a duplex)

that can rival the latter construction: it is the Château Dufresne also located at the east end of Sherbrooke Street, near Pie IX Boulevard. Designed by Marius Dufresne, a Montreal architect and contractor of the first quarter of the century, this mansion was a joint venture of Marius and his brother Oscar who tried to launch a select residential district in that part of the town. They failed, perhaps because the east end of Montreal was already too identifiable with the French town and its poor people. The Château Dufresne was later converted into an educational institution. Its future now remains uncertain.

To conclude, we should briefly note that even very temporary architectural fashions such as those launched by architects Norman Shaw and Henry Hobson Richardson found their place in the Victorian domestic architecture of Montreal. The two houses on 3465-71 Drummond Street, for instance, made of splendid red brick, are typical of Shaw's style with their graceful design, their Dutch gables and their slightly protruding bay-windows. As for Richardson, we can trace his impact - even though the mixture of foreign influences the era was able to contrive - in the magnificent row-houses located on the north side of Dorchester Boulevard, between St. Matthew and St. Mark Streets. The Association des architectes de la province de Québec has established its headquarters in one of

these buildings.

2. Towards Standardized Housing

The houses we have analyzed in the Square Mile are almost all detached residences: they show but one small aspect of domestic architecture during the Victorian era. It is an aspect dominated by individualism and heavily loaded with pretentious features borrowed from foreign cultures. It has influenced residential development, to this day, in municipalities and well-to-do areas such as Outremont, Westmount and Hampstead, except that concern for comfort has gradually replaced concern for style. If we are interested in the other facets of domestic Victorian architecture we should turn our attention to the rows of houses built along Montreal's traditional grid of streets. Depending on whether they are located in the west end or in the east end of the town these row-houses may be found in low, middle, and high-income areas, and differ accordingly.

Victorian row-houses may be found inside the Square Mile and in its immediate periphery; they are deprived from the British models, conceived as rows of individual units with rooms distributed over several storeys. These rows follow the same concept as Prince of Wales Terrace except that their façades which are always made of stone are usually decorated with ornaments and bear witness to the impact of the

Picturesque trend. This kind of dwelling may be found on Ste-Famille Street. They are three-storey houses (with the third floor usually fitted under a curb-roof) built on lots 50 feet by 90 feet (two housing units per lot); some have outside staircases to reach the main floor. The same kind of row-houses, two or three storeys high, with grey or brown stone façades and often with bay windows may be found on Crescent Street or on Peel Street, north of Sherbrooke Street. In the latter case they are built on lots which are about 25 feet wide and 100 to 130 feet long. This type of housing seems to be exclusively confined to the richer areas or to the anglo-phone municipalities; they are seldom encountered in the franco-phone areas where only a few isolated examples are found on Laval Avenue near St-Louis Square. This is easily explained: besides being of British origin, these houses required a fairly high income which was rare among French Canadians.

Once outside the Square Mile, going eastwards, one cannot fail to notice a type of vertical housing, with several flats set on top of each other, which seems to prevail everywhere. The first examples of this kind are found on Hutchison Street with its two-storey houses and its stone façades with superfluous Picturesque features. Similar façades are also found in the east end, on the main thoroughfares and on the richer residential streets where their residential

density is generally higher. St-Hubert and St-Denis, for instance, between Ste-Catherine and Sherbrooke, are lined up with sturdy apartment houses with stone façades, some of which are very austere and others quite pleasant. There are also similar houses on Cherrier Street and Berri Street and on that part of Laval Avenue immediately north of Sherbrooke. The important thing about the latter examples is that access to the second floor is most often provided by outside staircases.

The further one penetrates into the populated areas of Rosemount, St-Edouard, Plateau Mont-Royal, or Verdun, the more one notices the predominance of a characteristic type of housing consisting of brick houses set in a row with two or three storeys of flats invariably provided with balconies, galleries, and outside staircases in the front as well as the back. In the nineteenth century, every country, and perhaps even every large city, has produced its own type of housing, suited to the economic, social, and cultural conditions of the majority of its population. It is then a standard type that seems hardly original because of the very fact that it is so common; it covers large areas of the towns and bestows on them a part of its own identity and character. In the large cities of Continental Europe, as well as in Scotland (Glasgow and Edinburgh) or in New York, the most common type of housing at that time seemed to be the five or six-storey apartment house.

In Boston, it was the famous "Three-Decker"; in St. Louis and Chicago it was the two or three-storey type. On the other hand, in England, in London as well as in certain American cities such as Baltimore and Philadelphia, the prevalent type is the one-family house built on a terrace, with generally two or three storeys, or sometimes four or five, depending on the financial status of their occupants.¹¹

This kind of standardized housing appeared in Montreal at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. Its origin is unfortunately not quite clear but we shall nevertheless try to retrace it here. We are interested in discovering how and why the urban type of house we analyzed in chapter five (i.e. the one-family stone or wooden house, built in a row, with two or more storeys and its rooms distributed breadthwise) evolved into this new type of urban housing, usually made of brick with flats built on top of each other and rooms distributed lengthwise.

First of all, it is obvious that the phasing out of the one-family house and its replacement by the apartment house can be explained by the need to cope with the rapidly increasing population attracted by the employment opportunities in Montreal following the acceleration of industrialization. The increase in residential density, however, was related not only to the general increase in population but also, more

specifically, to the growing number of workers who had to find a house close to the job opportunities or at least close to public transport - first tramways drawn by horses, then electric tramways - enabling them to commute to their place of work. This explains why the first vertical type of apartment houses appeared in the early industrial areas of Montreal or in sectors reasonably close to employment concentration. Some of the latter areas happened to be ready for re-development for they had been devastated by the great fires which ravaged Montreal in the middle of the nineteenth century, especially in 1845 and 1852.

According to Cooper, who obtained his information from rather inaccessible sources, the first vertical housing units were built on Pointe St-Charles to accommodate workers employed in the construction of Victoria Bridge and in the workshops of the Grand Trunk. These houses were built in rows, on virgin lots which were of uniform dimensions: 25 feet by 100 feet. Their façades were flush with the sidewalks. At the back, there was room for the washrooms (built outside the house at that time), the community wells, laundry facilities and sheds to which small alleys provided access.¹² Their occupants were mostly Irishmen driven away from their own country by the Great Famine; the very names of this embryonic development reveal the identity of its residents; Forfar, Conway,

Britannia and Menai Streets. Nothing remains today of this small settlement; the Autostade and a part of the Bonaventure Expressway have been built on its site.

On the other side of the marshalling yard of Pointe St-Charles, however, there are still several residential streets: Sébastopol, de la Congrégation, Ste-Madeleine, Bourgeois, Charon, Favard and le Ber, which probably developed at about the same time and along the same lines as the Irish settlement just described. This other residential section was built on virgin territory originally owned by the Sisters of Charity, of the General Hospital in Montreal, and by the Sisters of the Congregation of Notre-Dame. It was apparently developed with the same kind of concern for order and standardization as in the previous case. The only difference was that there were no back alleys in the original plan and the land was subdivided into uniform plots about 47 feet wide by 87 to 95 feet long. Sébastopol Street (which was undoubtedly given its name to commemorate the victory of Sébastopol in 1855, thus allowing us to approximately date its development) can be considered as typical of its kind, with its dull rows of two-storey brick houses, their two-room flats built on top of each other and distributed lengthwise. These houses are all identical, a fact which leads us to believe they were all built by the same contractor.

This type of multiple-family dwelling also emerged at the time in the periphery of the downtown area. It probably started in the sectors which were redeveloped following the great fire of July 9 and 10, 1852, which raged for 26 hours, destroying almost half the houses in Montreal, in the sectors extending between St-Laurent, Maisonneuve, St-Denis, and Craig, on the one hand, and between La Gauchetière and the St. Lawrence River on the other hand, from the Champ-de-Mars to the founderies of Ste-Marie, which stood approximately at the level of Papineau Avenue. Unfortunately, we cannot rely on these places as witnesses in the present case for they have since undergone many changes. The Faubourg à la Mélasse, for instance, a picturesque residential area which had developed east of the Champ-de-Mars after the 1852 fire, was in turn partially demolished (and consequently literally faded away) to make room for Viger Station, for the harbour facilities and, more recently, in the fall of 1963, for la Maison de Radio-Canada.¹³ One can best reconstruct the process that led to the first stage of standardized housing by considering a sector, adjacent to the two previous ones, which is bounded by Amherst Street, Sherbrooke Street, Papineau Avenue and Dorchester Boulevard. The latter district has hardly changed since it was first developed; it is therefore possible to retrace the gradual standardization of the urban blocks, building lots and of the houses themselves

and finally arrive at a typical model of streets and housing of which Wolfe Street is undoubtedly a good example.

The first streets to originate in this sector were Champlain, Maisonneuve (today Alexandre de Sève), Plessis, Panet and de la Visitation. They look like long corridors lined up with uninterrupted rows of houses following the fairly regular outline of the cadastre. A closer examination reveals that the urban blocks bounded by these streets are 200 to 230 feet wide, without any inside lanes and that inside the blocks there used to be - and still are to an extent - a medium row of houses standing back to back. Services for and access to these houses were normally provided through passageways or carriage gates running through the houses which were bordering the streets. So, beneath the apparent uniformity conferred by the orthogonal traffic grid, this urban fabric is not as regular as it appears. Inside the blocks there is plenty of room for the unexpected and the mixture of heterogeneous constructions provides a rather interesting experiment in spatial relationships.

The houses themselves display a number of characteristics that are relevant to the evolution of the anonymous domestic architecture in urban Montreal. Most of them consist of a wooden framework covered with a layer of brick and are built right against the sidewalk. Their façade is quite simple;

they have no balcony and they usually have two doors next to each other on the same landing, one leading directly to the ground floor, the other to an inner staircase leading to the floor above. There are usually two storeys and where there are three, the two top ones usually belong to the same apartment and the third floor is then laid out under a curb roof. There are three types of roof: flat, curb, and composite. In the latter case, a steep sloping side with dormers looks onto the street while the other side is only slightly slanted. The dormers, together with other components of the roof like the cornice, are usually the only ornaments on these rather austere and classical façades. The apartments, which are usually two rooms deep, are quite small but full of light. Access to the inner courtyard through an inside corridor cuts down the space allotted to the ground floor apartments, which usually consist of only three rooms.¹⁴

There are usually galleries and an outside staircase at the back of these houses. Later on these vertical and horizontal means of communication would be commonly provided on both sides of this type of house. It seems, however, that this practice dates back to earlier days. Indeed, outside stairs leading to the upper rooms were first built within the inner courtyard and garden of the traditional urban house. Then, because of demographic pressures and the ensuing scarcity

of building lots suitably located in the vicinity of available employment or of the facilities provided by the community, people started to build apartments above the sheds and the stables in the courtyards, or simply converted their traditional houses into separate apartments. The outside staircases, which were but elaborate versions of the ladder, seemed to be the easiest and cheapest way to reach those lodgings. This was really nothing very new. Mrs. Mitchell and Mrs. Leys, in their fascinating book on everyday life in London, remind us that, towards the end of the Middle Ages, craftsmen and workers used to live in apartment houses of a kind where ladders were used to reach the upper floors. The use of ladders or outside staircases was quite frequent, even in the case of comfortable houses for only the rich could afford the luxury of an inner staircase.¹⁵ There is no doubt that wherever such contrivances appear, the economic factor played a predominant role.

When the vertical-housing concept was first applied to apartment houses in Montreal, as in the working-class residential developments at Pointe St-Charles, or in the type of dwellings in the St. James and Bourget areas, the outside stairs became the most suitable means of linking the apartments on the upper floors to the washrooms, the wells and the laundry facilities located in the backyards. The apartments were individually heated and it was essential to provide access to

the coal supply normally stored in the backyard and to ensure easy disposal of the ashes. An inside staircase leading to the backyard would have been equally suitable. However, since the floor space of these apartments was itself strictly limited to save costs - 500 square feet is an average floor surface for a four-room apartment in the St. James and Bourget areas - and since a part of this precious floor space was already wasted to accommodate the inside front staircase, outside stairs solved the problem of these occasional - though quite essential - activities. The gallery now became a necessary link between the outside staircase and the apartment. As it was often impossible to place the outside stairs in front of the door of the upper floor, this landing became very useful for temporary storage, for resting or for other specific purposes. Galleries appeared as the natural extension of already cramped lodgings. Their use would eventually be perfected to lead directly to a shed or a hangar used as a storage place for coal or personal belongings.¹⁶

Moving slightly to the west, towards Wolfe Street and Christopher Columbus Street for instance, without leaving the area we have selected, we observe a gradual standardization of the urban house as well as of its topography. Here, the development lots have regular and identical dimensions: 21 feet by 66 feet, and 22 feet by 72 feet. Moreover, a

back-alley runs across the block. Compared to the 200 or 230 feet length of the previous blocks the 155 feet length of these lots eliminates any waste of space and discourages any attempt to build on the inside of the block. The service alley eliminates the need for passages through the houses bordering on the street. The ground-floor apartments are the first to benefit from the space thus regained. These houses and the ones on the west side of Wolfe Street in particular, while inspired by the previous examples, were built according to a standard, repetitive pattern: a two-storey structure with flats on top of each other, a flat roof, entrances in the front, through two adjoining doors, one leading to the ground floor, the other to a staircase reaching the second floor; at the back, access to the second floor is gained through an outside staircase and a gallery. The construction has also been standardized: a wooden frame covered with red brick. This type of urban block is undoubtedly the work of one sole controlling agent, a developer or a contractor, perhaps, who directed the planning of the site as well as the construction of the dwellings, according to a definite plan and with a definite purpose in mind ... probably maximum profit. (Fig. 12 & Pl. 58)

Maximum utilization of space through planning appears to have been systematically achieved on Sherbrooke Terrace, on the virgin territories caught up in urban

development in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. A typical case in point is that of the subdivision of the rural estates of Mr. William, Mr. Logan and of other adjacent estates; they were part of the former village of St-Jean Baptiste and of the former Côte St-Louis which are today referred to as the Plateau Mont-Royal. There, the size of the building lots is standard almost everywhere: 25 feet wide by 80 to 100 feet long. No regulations have ever interfered to determine these dimensions: they seem to have been established by custom.

The type of housing which developed in this sector and which was to become typical in Montreal, was also designed for profit. However, compared to the houses on the Lower Terrace which we have just described, they differ in several respects as they were built at a time when there was a need to increase the density of residential development. With the large increase in urban population which was mainly due to the immigration of large rural families, it became imperative to concentrate the greatest possible number of people on the shortest possible lines of access. This was aimed at reducing the cost of the transporting - transport was still dependent on rather primitive means - of people as well of the goods indispensable to their existence; it was also aimed at bringing down the cost of equipment such as sidewalks, aqueducts, sewers, and of gas and electricity services. This need for

concentration was a determining factor in the orientation of the rooms which would be laid out between two common walls running parallel to the length of the lot instead of being oriented along its width as they used to be in earlier models.

The first distinctive feature to attract our attention is the outside front staircase. At that time houses were set back from the line of the sidewalk leaving vacant space. This unused space provided an opportunity to build the staircase leading to the upper floors on the outside of the house. The space thus saved inside the apartment was then put to good use. For houses with three floors, the staircase from the balcony of the second floor to the flat on the third floor usually remained inside. Even then, however, there are many examples of outside stairs of all kinds with several flights climbing up to the third floor balcony. The front balconies are another distinctive feature of this type of house which were made possible when houses were set back from the sidewalk. Just as in the case of the galleries at the back, the balcony serves as a landing between the flats and the outside stairs and is the natural extension of an apartment since most of these houses were designed to accommodate people who had recently arrived from the country. When galleries and verandahs were quite common, these features were possibly considered as something normal ... a fact which certainly did not escape the

notice of speculators, developers and contractors. Front balconies may also have been an attempt, whether conscious or not, to imitate the houses of the rich where the main entrance was often protected by a porch, the roof of which was used as a balcony for one of the rooms on the second floor.

Inside this type of housing the layout of the flats distributed lengthwise, is also standardized. For instance, when a flat occupies the whole width of the lot, which is normally the case for the ground floor flat, usually occupied by the owners themselves, the 6 or 8 rooms follow each other lengthwise, distributed on each side of a central corridor. In front, on the one side there is a double drawing-room and on the other a bedroom and a boudoir or a double bedroom. Proceeding towards the back, we enter a kitchen, with or without its adjacent windowless dining-room and on the other side there is a single or a double bedroom. When the apartment has an L-shaped plan, with an extension reaching almost to the end of the lot and usually leading to a shed, this extension usually contains the dining-room, the kitchen, a bedroom and sometimes washrooms. On the other side there is a closed room sometimes equipped with a small alcove.

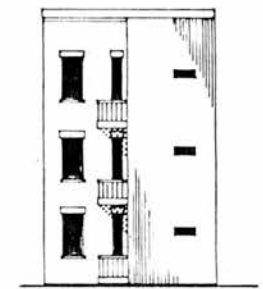
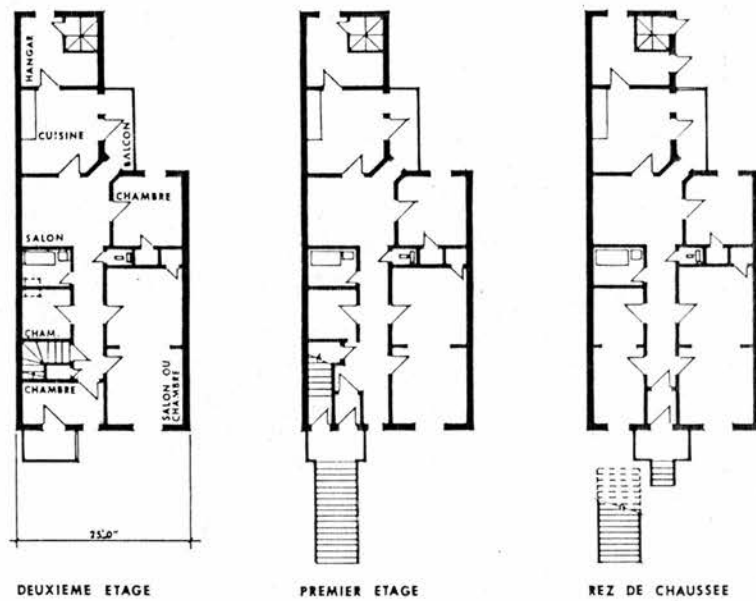
The flats on the upper floors follow the exact plan of the apartment on the ground floor, inasmuch as they cover the same floor area. However, they are generally smaller,

for one of several reasons: they do not follow the extension provided for on the ground floor; they lose one room or have a smaller room to make room for the inside staircase leading to the third floor, or again - and this is the case with most second and third floors - because the area is split into two separate flats with four rooms on either side of a passage: a double bedroom, a washroom, a windowless drawing - or a dining room and a kitchen. Every apartment has access to the back galleries which lead to the sheds and to an outside staircase leading to the service alley. The staircase is often housed in the shed itself.¹⁷ (Fig. 13 & 14)

There are, of course, a few variations of this type of apartment. The ones we have just described seems common enough to be considered as typical of the type of housing which was popular in Montreal at the end of the nineteenth century and in the first quarter of the twentieth century, especially in the large francophone areas. As late as 1948, John Bland said about these houses that "for most Montrealers, a flat in a three storey block is a home."¹⁸

3. Standardized Housing: Pros and Cons:

The standard Montreal house we have just described was severely judged by nearly all critics whether they were town-planners, geographers, architects or artists. They blamed it for its exiguity and its poor layout (the bedrooms



VUE ARRIERE



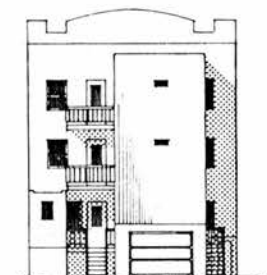
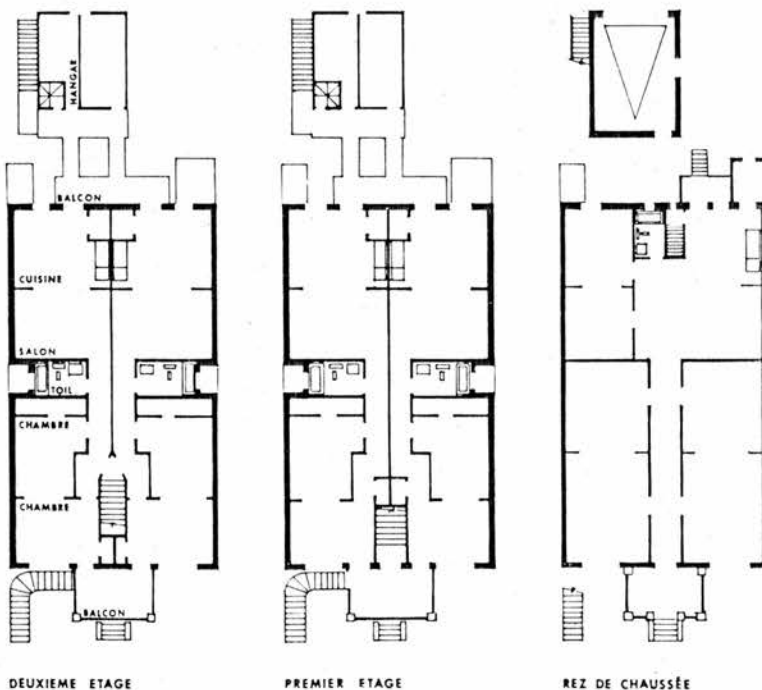
VUE AVANT

ADRESSE
4438 - 42
CHRISTOPHE COLOMB
Montreal

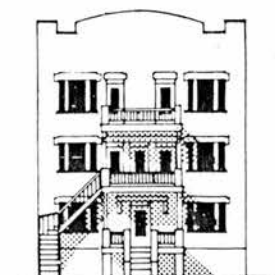
ECHELLE
1/16" = 1'-0"

Fig. 13 Typical house, L shaped plan.

Fig. 14 Excellent example of a typical early 20th century house. Especially prevalent in the wards of Plateau Mont-Royal and of Verdun.



VUE ARRIERE



VUE AVANT

ADRESSE
4416 - 4424 FABRE
Montreal

ECHELLE
1/16" = 1'-0"

and living-room are located on the noisy side of the street while the utility rooms look on to the quiet backyards), as well as for its poor lighting and ventilation. They also criticized the obvious weakness of its construction, its flat roof, tin cornices, balconies, galleries, sheds, outside staircases, in fact, all its distinctive features.¹⁹ The outside staircases in particular, were universally disapproved. We could quote critics ad nauseam; but we shall only cite Victor Barbeau who sums up almost all the unfavourable comments in a few pointed words on the subject: he complains ... "ces logements-corridors allongés d'une échelle improprement appelée escalier, ... ces escaliers extérieurs dont personne ne nous disputera la paternité devant l'histoire..."²⁰

The time has come to revise those judgments, to forget the stereotyped concepts of architecture and beauty and to be more concerned about the social, economic, and cultural conditions which have generated this kind of house. Following the lead of commercial architecture with its open plan and skeleton stone façade, which in the same era seemed to be an original solution to new needs, the Montreal duplex and triplex appeared as an emergency solution at a time when rural migrants were flocking to the big city. In the course of the last decade of the nineteenth century and of the first two decades of the twentieth century, the population of the

city of Montreal had tripled, rising from 182,695 in 1891 to about 618,506 in 1921.²¹

Such a flow of population and its concentration inside the town tended to increase the economic value of the land but most of these rural migrants were particularly poor. The result was that the density of these new areas and the kind of housing available created a state where an equilibrium was reached between the cost of housing (including land) and what the potential residents could afford to pay. The fluctuations followed the growth curve of the urban population which explains the gradual move from the sturdy and comparatively expensive colonial urban one-family houses, to the kind of low-rent housing found in the areas of the Lower Terrace, and finally to the high-density duplex and triplex of later Victorian areas. The latter type of housing was particularly well suited to the rural migrant who had only a small amount of capital to invest in urban property. It also answered the needs of those who only required temporary shelter until their financial situation would allow them to afford better accommodation.

This type of urban housing offers its owner about the same return and presents the same operating characteristics as the rural farm itself. In the first place, the capital expenditure for building or purchasing, is not very high and involves practically no risks; it requires neither a thorough

understanding of the financial markets nor particular operating skills. On the contrary, this kind of investment provides the owner with a stable income that does not conflict with other profitable activities. As in the case of the rural farmer he can live in his own house, provide for its maintenance and keep better control on his assets. Finally, he can bequeath the building and the land to his heirs.²²

In the case of the tenants, who are the large majority among the occupants of these houses, this kind of housing is so popular that one can only conclude that it is the best they can hope for, considering their social and financial standing. Hans Blumenfeld reminds us that in every country it is the most common type of building that proves to be the most inexpensive as it constitutes a frame of references for the building industry and for the construction codes.²³ A succinct analysis of the construction features of this kind of housing would show that as far back as the end of the nineteenth century it was already using modern techniques of standardization and prefabrication.

First of all, the structural wooden frame covered with bricks has replaced the supporting walls made of stone, brick, or brick covered with stone. These two materials combined, i.e. wood and brick, need total standardization to be efficiently used. The main beams must have the same dimensions

and the same specifications when they reach the building yard. The same applies to the use of brick which can save considerable costs when compared to the cost of transporting, handling, setting, and cutting of stone. The use of brick to cover a wooden framework eliminates the drawbacks inherent to wooden construction (fire hazards and year-round maintenance), while retaining its advantages: it is cheap and warm. Another advantage is that the curb roof is replaced by a flat roof with a sheet covering thus saving space, materials, building costs and time, and also economizing on maintenance and heating. Indeed, the curb roof with its many surfaces exposed to the natural elements accumulates ice and icicles in winter. On the contrary, water from flat roof is easily collected and drained through the heated building and the snow piling on top of the roof provides an excellent insulation. A flat roof, however, requires a type of prefabrication and standardization for tar-paper, joints, vents, drains, etc.²⁴ Vertical communications provide another cost-saving device: the outside staircase economizes on the space for a stairwell and on its heating. Here again there is a high level of standardization and prefabrication to manufacture all the components of vertical and horizontal communication: stringers, steps and hand-rails for the stairs; guard-rails for the balconies and galleries. The need for prefabrication even extends to the decorative

components of the façades such as the sheet-iron cornice ornaments which are made in a workshop. Again, there are other factors which contribute to economy in construction: the blind common walls, the re-usability of the plans, and the superposition of the service equipment and plumbing units. While this kind of standardization and prefabrication certainly answered the need for the immediate accommodations of thousands of people, it also served the interests of builders and contractors eager to minimize their investments and to maximize their profits by allowing them to know ahead of time the quantity of materials required as well as the machinery and labour necessary to assemble them.

Let us now turn to the outside staircase, which has been so widely criticized. A more objective look may disclose some unsuspected qualities. It has been repeatedly said, for instance, that it was ill-suited for our hard winters. We must admit that standardized housing shares the blame in this respect with all Victorian architectural production. Is there any building of that period, from the neo-Gothic to the neo-Baroque, from the "Second Empire" style to that of the "Beaux-Arts" that is truly suited to our climate? We could look at the matter the other way around and say that the outside stairs are better suited to our stifling summers than the inside staircase; and the same applies to our balconies. For one thing,

the outside staircase provides the residents with more privacy, with a psychological feeling of greater safety than the inside staircase leading to several apartments. One has only to live in an apartment building with an inside staircase like the ones which were built in the late forties - when the regulation forbidding the building of stairs outside the house was being enforced - to realize that those towers of vertical communication carry all the noise and the smell everywhere (imagine what might happen in the case of a fire!) that they are expensive to maintain, that they can shelter hooligans and other unwelcome visitors and finally that they bring about encounters whether you like it or not. In this respect, the outside staircase and the individual balcony provide greater flexibility; they encourage social communications from one staircase to another, from one balcony to the next one, without making such encounters unavoidable.

Even the sheds do not deserve the contempt in which they are usually held. Apart from the fact that they used to be indispensable for storing the fuel for stoves and furnaces, they were and still are very useful as storage places. These apartments usually appeal to average-income families or simply to families obliged to store away their belongings for later use. As in the case of the outside staircase, these sheds perfectly illustrate their function: indeed, they are usually

quite distinct from the apartments and are built in light, less durable materials. They are not even that displeasing to the eye, for, at times, the interplay of their masses with the galleries create interesting visual relationships. Lack of maintenance is the main cause of their shabby appearance. A good coat of colourful paint would probably convert them into attractive urban fixtures.

The most valid reproach we can make against this type of housing is that it lacks both air and light. This is obviously due to the fact that the rooms are laid out in a line between two common blind walls. It is quite common to find four such windowless rooms in a row, or a room sharing a sky-light shaft with the bathroom or without any light whatsoever. There are also all sorts of devices such as glass doors, to dispense light to the staircase, the corridors and the dining-room.

To make things worse, most of the streets where this kind of housing can be found are poorly oriented. They follow the structure of the "côte", the colonial unit of territory analyzed in Chapter Two, which left the Victorian house to deal with a rather inadequate pattern. Indeed, this structure, which remained unchanged is responsible for the typical grid of streets in Montreal. This is why the great majority of those streets run from east to west; this is true of

Longue-Pointe, Hochelaga, Maisonneuve, Plateau Mont-Royal, Rosemount, Villeray, Ahuntsic, Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, Verdun, etc. As a result, only one side of those uninterrupted rows of houses is exposed to the sun during the greater part of the year. On the odd-number side of the street, it is the front of the houses which is exposed, while the back of those on the even-number side is exposed. This means that at least half of the rooms hardly get any sun. These already unfavorable conditions are not improved by the position of the outside staircase blocking the front windows and by the permanent shade projected at the back of the various galleries, stairs and sheds. Tragic as it may seem, there are apartments which never receive the faintest ray of sunshine; this is usually the case on the ground floor of houses built with their back to the sun. Moreover, because of their orientation, those houses face the prevailing winds, a fact which explains why the snow accumulates on the galleries and on the balconies during winter storms.

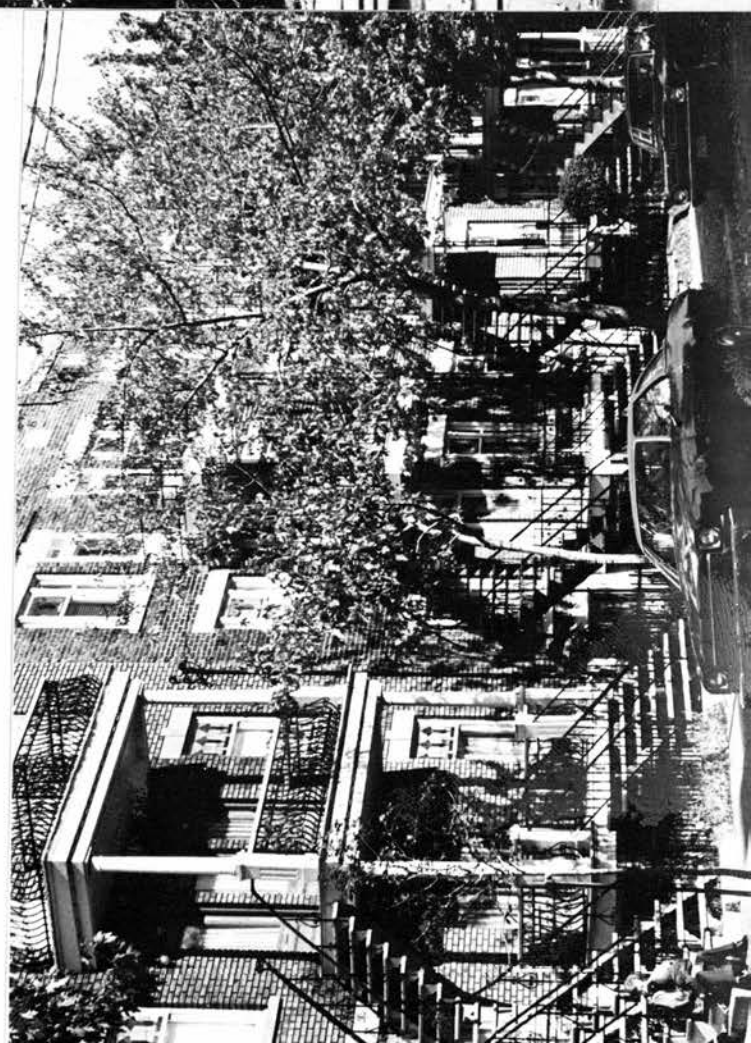
Thus, the typical house with its "long" plan, its usually narrow, poorly-lit and poorly-ventilated rooms is certainly not without defects. Yet, it would be wrong to blame architecture for these defects, for they stem from poverty and lack of resources, both of which prevailed long before this type of architecture came into being. On the contrary, this house, which is a true illustration of an architecture without

architects, is quite remarkable for its high degree of prefabrication, for the frank, overt lay-out of its functions and for its cybernetic potential expressed through its galleries, passages and outside staircases, all of which are reminiscent of the aerial conveyors of the grain elevators on the harbour. These original houses have generated an equally original environment which has deeply marked the identity and the image of Montreal. This aspect will be dealt with in the next chapter as a typical feature of the Victorian legacy. (Pl. 59 & 60)



58. Wolfe Street, Ontario terrace.

59. Carnier Street, north of St-Joseph Boulevard, Plateau Mont-Royal.



60. A typical dwelling. Fabre Street, south of Mont-Royal Avenue.

THE VICTORIAN LEGACY

The building of the cities was a characteristic Victorian achievement, impressive in scale but limited in vision, creating new opportunities but also providing massive new problems. Perhaps their outstanding feature was hidden from public view - their hidden network of pipes and drains and sewers, one of the biggest technical and social achievements of the age, a sanitary "system" more comprehensive than the transport system. Yet their surface world was fragmented, intricate, cluttered, eclectic and noisy, the unplanned product of private enterprise economy developing within an older traditional society.

Asa Briggs.¹

1. Discovering a Legacy

Industrial towns are generally blamed for the environment they generate. This dismal reputation seems justified when we think of the chaos, the short-term expediency and the "laissez-faire" which have come to replace the order, the organic unity and clarity that used to characterize the pre-industrial urban environment. It is as if the essence of the city had been diluted and had lost its flavour following the explosion of the traditional urban structures under the pressure of demography.

The comments of critics like Lewis Mumford on the

disturbances in the habitat and the social failure they most often reflected, have largely contributed to identify most of the industrial towns with one single model, Coketown, an infamous town full of ugliness, squalor and despair.² We are tempted, at first, to applaude this comparison, for the dreary images of industrial towns seem to match the prototype only too well. In our own country, the conditions described by Herbert Brown Ames in the "City below the Hill" were far from being ideal and seem to have been very similar in all the working class urban areas of the industrialized world. For instance, what difference was there at the time, between our Irish communities, clustered in the district of Ste-Anne around the oppressive factories of the Great Trunk Company and "Little Ireland" in Manchester described by J. P. Kay? Kay was a doctor who had practised there and, in 1832, he wrote that it was "surrounded on every side by some of the largest factories of the town, whose chimneys vaunt forth dense clouds of smoke, which hang heavily over this insalubrious region"³.

The fact that the same territory harboured the "City below the Hill" and the opulent Golden Square Mile further emphasizes the unjust and dilapidated areas. The wealth of the Square Mile on the one hand, and the squalor in Ste-Anne, St-Henri or Ste-Cunégonde, in those days, were the two extremes of an age with very little sense of measure; an age which could

just as easily generate weaklings and wretches such as those on whom Dickens lavished his compassion or men like the heroes we read about in Kipling; an age that could build dark, cluttered-up and stuffy houses as readily as it could construct palaces for its railways.

Asa Briggs suggests a number of arguments⁴ to support his contention that, on the whole, the record of the industrial town cannot all be negative. In his opinion, the industrial town was the result of unprecedented technical revolutions and the fact that the latter did not always happily fit into the urban fabric does not mean that they failed to contribute to progress. For instance, electricity - which would be used for artificial lighting, for the tramway, and the subway, and later on for telegraph, telephone and television communications - together with the railways are achievements of the Victorian era from which we still benefit today. It is true that at the time, communication and transportation services were in the hands of private enterprise and that the latter were more concerned with profit than with the welfare of the community; it is also true that railways have often wrought havoc in the urban fabric, and that the ugly poles carrying electric cables have defaced monuments and landscapes alike. Yet, fast and even instantaneous means of communication have provided man with a fantastic tool which would

utterly change his urban style of life, in most cases for the better. To mention only electric light and easy communications, who would dream of going back to the state of pre-industrialization? And are we today in a position to condemn the effects the steam engine had on the urban life in the past when, today, the impact of the internal combustion engine (in itself a minor invention when compared to the steam engine) is literally destroying us?

Communication services - railways, tramways, the telephone, the telegraph - and electricity services providing energy were "apparent" services, "hidden" services, such as sewers and aqueducts, were, in the opinion of Briggs⁵, part of an even more advanced system than the transportation network itself. In Montreal for instance, the few rather dilapidated wooden ducts which, in the early 19th century, distributed water through a gravity fed system were replaced at the beginning of the twentieth century by a strongly structured and ramified system with powerful mechanical pumps and huge tanks distributing more than 68 million gallons of water daily to over half a million citizens (1912). During the same period, the sewer system with its 240 miles of brick ducts seems to have functioned equally well.⁶ Were it not for excellent systems of that kind, the existence of important urban settlements like Montreal would have been uncertain, if not impossible.

That part of the Victorian legacy became so essential to modern urban life that we took it for granted and soon forgot its legator.

Most of the nineteenth century towns, whether on this continent or in Europe, have undergone these technical revolutions, enjoying their benefits and suffering their unavoidable consequences. Yet, they did not subsequently merge into stereotyped patterns. On the contrary; except for certain common social characteristics, each town drew its own ferment of identification from this exceptional period. Montreal, like Baltimore or Pittsburg, Birmingham or Manchester, inherited some distinctive features from the Victorian era which have marked the city's identity and character. It is that legacy we intend to analyse in the following pages.

One could easily be misled by these features, however. At first sight all the public or religious monuments we have described in Chapter Eight - the Catholic and Protestant cathedrals, the courts, the banks and the stations - may seem characteristic of Montreal. With the possible exception of some elements which are more regional in character, like Victor Bourgeau's steeples and churches, this is not the case. The Gothic renewal, neo-classicism, the eclectic and picturesque styles have influenced nineteenth century architecture in every western country. Montreal's Christ Church Cathedral,

for instance, may be considered as a prototype reproduced in almost every Canadian provincial capital, in several towns in the U.S.A. and all across the British Empire, including probably Australia, in the same way that every large American town has a bank with a classical fronton, like the one designed by our own architect, John Wells.

We are more likely to find the distinctive features we are looking for in the global environment of these monuments or in certain characteristic projects, as for instance, in the residential working class area. While it is true that the Church of Notre-Dame in Montreal finds its counterpart in New York's St. Patrick's Cathedral and that the Bank of Montreal is a twin to the Bank of Philadelphia (now the Customs Building) by William Strickland, the fact remains that those Montreal monuments find their identity from their confrontation on Place d'Armes, where they stand out against one another. One could also contend that Windsor Station has nothing really unique since it was inspired by the works of Richardson, the great American architect. Standing on the edge of Dominion Square, and linked by a green buffer-space to St. George Church, to Marie-Reine-du-Monde Cathedral and to the romantic Sun Life Building, it represents a unique sample of Victorian architecture.

In order to learn more about the Victorian legacy,

we must now turn to the study of whole environments and to their structural elements, i.e. the street, the square and the park.

2. The Environment as a Legacy

Compared to the town of the early nineteenth century, Montreal at the dawn of the twentieth century is beyond recognition. The old lines of structuration no longer prevail. The pre-industrial city was rather static: it was entirely centered around the physical symbols of religious and civil power. This, in a way, explains why the parish Church of Notre-Dame stood in the middle of Notre-Dame Street, the main thoroughfare: it was the true heart of the city. Then, with the spreading of industrialization, the traditional framework exploded, in the symbolical and physical sense of the word, to make room for mobility. From now on, the structures or urban development would depend more exclusively on economic trends and on the dictates of geography.

As we have already learned from Chapter Seven, the population would begin to settle down where industries had earlier been established. This, however, was only a temporary move, for, with the advent of public transport, horse-drawn at first and later electricity-driven, the population scattered across the territory.

This dispersion, eagerly encouraged by real estate

and land speculators was neither planned nor controlled, and while public transport services did their best to answer this spontaneous demand, they were not very concerned about orienting it. Thus, farmlands were invaded by the process of urbanization and the original cadastres with long narrow lots grouped into "côtes" were incorporated into the developing urban environment.

As previously established, such was the origin of our grid of streets, which explains the uniformity that was later to prevail in the speculators' developments.

While we may deplore the permanence of this uniform grid and take exception to its many defects, the fact remains that, under the circumstances, it was probably the simplest possible structure and the most appropriate to somehow contain the urban flood within orderly limits. Human settlement, henceforth, would no longer be distributed according to a comprehensive pattern centered around the symbols of power; it would be structured in relation to one sole criterion: the access to one's place of work or of trade. The physical town no longer illustrated common social and cultural interests inherited from the previous era, and it soon became a huge, anonymous machine, conditioned by the needs for housing and for labour. Speculation on land and housing played a significant part in this process. While the orthogonal grid superimposed

on the Montreal territory was not the outcome of conscious planning, it served the views and purposes of speculators no less than the grid designed for the streets of New York, for instance, which was the result of a deliberate decision. The Plan drafted in 1811 by the Commissioners of New York City was quite explicit in this regard... "A city is to be composed principally of the habitations of men, and that strait sided, and right angled houses are the most cheap to build, and the most convenient to live in."⁷

Though the orthogonal grid in Montreal as well as in New York seemed to be the best way to reap dividends for speculators and contractors, it was not flexible enough to follow the natural topography of a rather hilly territory and to make room for some of the social and cultural values cherished by certain communities. Thus, what logic was there in maintaining the same grid of streets to ascend Sherbrooke Terrace and the mountain and in extending it through the level surface of Plateau Mont-Royal? The grid pattern was also bound to generate monotony in urban developments for it cut across certain contrasting features which might have been otherwise utilized in a more advantageous manner. We are indeed struck by the fact that except for the cemeteries, Mount-Royal Park and Maisonneuve Park, our city has inherited very few green spaces from its Victorian days. As for the green spaces salvaged

from former farming land, they were quite small and were submitted to the straight-jacket treatment of the grid. While they may fulfil a useful role nowadays for recreational purposes, their impact on the surroundings, in terms of the contrast they provide, is insignificant when compared to that of wide open spaces.

One last implication of the grid is its inability to provide public or religious buildings with a site commensurate with their real or symbolic status in the city. In the case of religious buildings, it is common knowledge that the parish has been the foundation of all community life in Quebec, and that the parish church was the physical reflection of that social reality. This is the reason why, in traditional villages, the church is the focal point of the community. While parishes which were moved to a city environment may have retained some of their rural spirit - as Stuart Wilson pointed out in his comments on the Ontario Terrace⁸ - the parish churches themselves lost some of their grandeur. It now looked uncomfortable in the middle of rectangular blocks which had little to offer in terms of the right setting for the important social and cultural role of the church. In our view, two distinct realities are intertwined in those environments. One is a socio-cultural reality of communities sharing the same language, the same culture and - until recently, at least - the

same beliefs, which identify with specific institutions such as the church and the school. The other is a physical and economic reality made of a series of almost identical houses connected to an orderly and anonymous traffic network. These working class areas, with a high density of approximately 150-200 inhabitants per acre, used to be and still are "housing machines". They are like a functional organism with interchangeable cells which is heavily dependent on the various routes of the communications' network.

3. The Street as a Show

Long, endless streets, looking like impersonal service corridors are one of the most marking features of Victorian Montreal. There are exceptions, of course, even in the most populated areas; architects such as Wilson and Anderson have managed to leave us bits of streets and odd dead ends such as Delorme Avenue and Lartigue Avenue which are quite remarkable for the feeling of privacy they convey, for the architectural variety they display within a basic unity, and for the village characteristics they retain right in the heart of the metropolis.⁹ These few examples are not numerous enough, however, to dispel the feeling of tension and standardization prevailing in many of the streets of these destitute Victorian districts, especially those located at the foot of the Sherbrooke Terrace or of Pointe St-Charles. These streets have obviously

been built by speculators and contractors; we are here referring to Champlain Street, Alexandre de Sève, Plessis, Panet, de la Visitation, Beaudry, Montcalm, Wolfe, etc., on the one hand, and to Ste-Madeleine, de la Congrégation, Bourgeois and Charon on the other hand. One can sense a conflict between the rigid standardization of space, construction and even colours, and life ready to explode. Some streets on Plateau Mont-Royal as well as some sections of Rivard Street, for instance, seem to bristle with the same tension.

Yet, these areas do not provide a total picture of the Victorian residential world. Those who criticize the industrial town are usually too prone to dwell on a few selected details which they do not take the trouble to relate to an otherwise rich subject matter. Undeniably, the first industrial areas are quite striking and we find them in practically every town with almost the same characteristics everywhere. And if they are perhaps more conspicuous today, it is probably because they are mainly found in dilapidated zones which the collapse of their first industries or the encroachments of downtown have left deprived of any social liveliness, so that the ones that have survived are now at an advanced stage of decay. Anyhow, they only show one facet of the Victorian reality and we cannot ignore other areas which developed around them at the time or later on, and which present rather different

kinds of environments, from the very poor to the very prosperous.

Sherbrooke Street is perhaps the best example of an environment which is totally different from what we see on Wolfe, Montcalm or Sebastopol Streets. Today, it has lost its main Victorian features but at the turn of the century it was lined up with rich and pretentious residences, competing with each other in idyllic, almost pastoral surroundings. It was very much a Green Boulevard, a prestigious avenue, inspired by the French second empire as well as directly or indirectly by the residential avenues built in the same style in most large American cities in those days. This is the reason why Sherbrooke Street has often been called the Fifth Avenue or the Champs Elysées of Montreal.

Off Sherbrooke, there were other equally prestigious streets like Crescent, Hutchison, Sainte-Famille or Laval. Today, residential high-rises have marred this opulent environment, breaking the unity and continuity of its façades, and, sadder still, the trees that used to grace the streets have gradually disappeared. It was Stephen Leacock who recalled these avenues which reminded him of the vaults of some gothic cathedral.¹⁰ Reverend Borthwick, commenting on St-Denis Street, below Sherbrooke, resorts to a similar comparison when he writes that St-Denis... "is finely bordered both sides with

healthy trees and in summer, looking down, you seem to be entering a long avenue of some sylvan forest or a grand entrance to some ancient castle."¹¹ Original photographs of the early twentieth century give us but a faint idea of the visual effect of the foliage domes suspended over avenues like Park Avenue or Drummond Street.¹² Today, de Lorimier Avenue between Sherbrooke and St-Joseph is one of the only residential streets to have preserved a sufficient number of tall trees to recreate the feeling of this vanished environment.

The very picturesque and flamboyant architectural treatment of façades is another important characteristic of the rich Victorian residential districts. These façades are easily recognizable by their sawtooth silhouettes casting their weird roofs against the sky. Taken separately, these façades are often insignificant, heavy, and even absurd; they sometimes display the most atrocious bad taste. Yet, taken as a whole, their very tight texture tends to create an impression of exuberant profusion illustrating the wild optimism characteristic of the Victorian age, an age which was so lenient towards those on whom fortune bestowed her graces. Yet, there was a purpose in the midst of all that variety, all that "decorative libido", to use Melville Charney's picturesque expression¹³; the intention was to decorate the street, to convert those traffic corridors into a well identified social environment.

Unlike the façades of streets in industrial districts, the façades of those opulent streets were not transparent, but resolutely opaque, and, like very ornate screens, they drew the attention from what was going on behind them. From an architectural point of view, these façades were extravagant, and the manner in which they tried in every way to catch the eye is greatly responsible for the disrepute in which Victorian architecture is held. Yet, when we consider the town's plan and its communication system, these streets without an end, and these corridors leading nowhere except to other corridors, do retain a unique character and assume a role which is not only physical but also cultural and social. (Pl.63 to 66)

This precious quality of the Victorian street also prevails in the less privileged and more densely populated areas which developed in the early twentieth century on the second terrace, east of St. Lawrence Boulevard - itself a typical offspring of the Victoria age - or in municipalities such as Verdun. Main arteries such as St-Denis or St-Hubert, or some of the more select avenues such as Cherrier and Laval may seem somewhat pretentious but the other streets, distinctly characterized by their heavy density and accented by outside stairs, present a physical and social environment that we have only recently started to appreciate. All of Plateau Mont-Royal, which was mainly developed after Queen Victoria's death, is a



61. The Post Office. H.-Maurice Perrault, arch.; building completed in 1873.

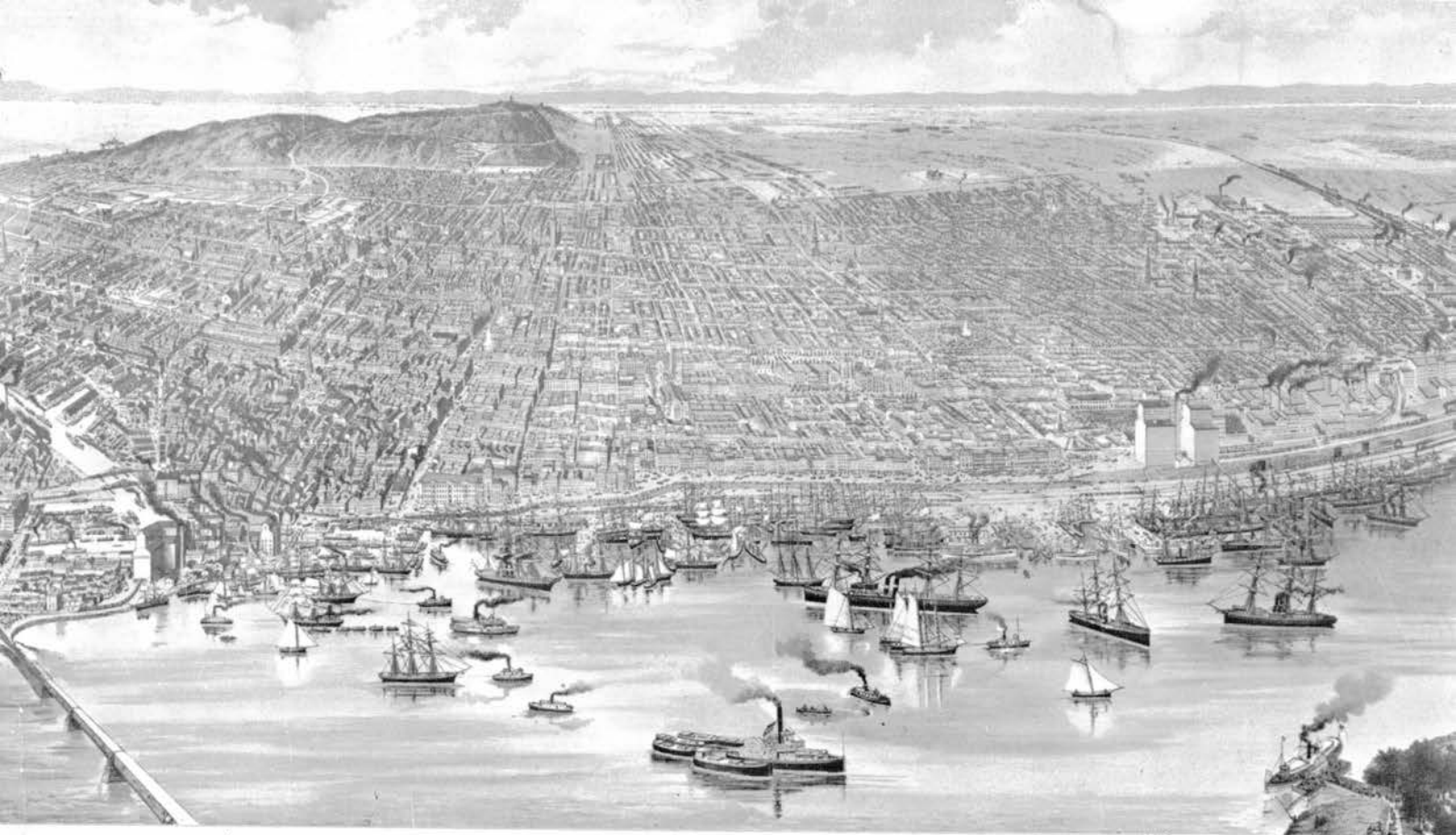


62. Redpath Library at McGill University. Sir Andrew Taylor and Gordon, arch., 1890-91.

63. The "show street": Laval Avenue, north of Sherbrooke Street.

64. The "show street": de Lorimier Avenue, south of Mont-Royal Avenue.





65. Aerial view of Montreal in 1889.

66. Aerial view of Montreal around 1920.



very good example of this specifically Victorian legacy: the streets as an anonymous service corridor with outside stairs leading directly to units of habitation. The latter enjoy 'total privacy: they hide behind stone or brick walls, behind the parapets of balconies, behind stair notch-boards which through texture and repetition provide a naive but somehow peaceful architectural decor. Façades lending themselves to the character of the streets, and architecture for the sake of the passer-by, remain constant features of the Victorian environment, as we already pointed out in our study of commercial buildings. Those who still need convincing should take a look at the residences located from 3902 to 3928 on Berri Street.

4. The Square as a Legacy

As a positive contribution of Victorian heritage the square is just as much a distinctive feature of the heart of our metropolis as the street we have just been describing. It is hard to imagine Montreal without Dominion Square or St. Louis Square. Unfortunately, many squares have disappeared today. There were at least twenty of them at the turn of the century and some of those which have survived are but a shadow of what they used to be three quarters of a century ago. We specially deplore the loss of Western Square created in 1870, and of Dufferin Square (1871) not merely because they were squares but because their absence today deprives the downtown

area of a potential polarization of activities, and certainly of contrasting elements and a freshness and diversity it is now so painfully lacking. Some of the older squares such as Richmond Square (1844) or Viger Square built in the same year, are like a green oasis; they offer a welcome break in an urban setting which is getting more crowded, more stifling and more dreary as they age. It is also regrettable that the old respectable gardens, such as Victoria Square and Phillips Square which used to be poles of attraction because of the good landscaping that made them comparable to the most beautiful Georgian squares in London and Dublin have now been converted - the former into a dull patch of sand used as a doormat for Place Victoria, and the latter into a pedestal for the huge pretentious monument commemorating the reign of King Edward VII the Peacemaker, whose monument was unveiled in September, 1914... and as if it was not enough to crush such a small garden under the weight of such a heavy king, the magnificent elms which embellished the square were shamelessly felled to clear the view.¹⁴

Today we believe that squares are essential to the life and image of the city; they are necessary to polarize activities, to relate the people to the environment, to rest the eye and to grace our monotonous urban structure with colour and fresh air; yet, most of our squares were born by accident and those that we now hail as the jewels of the metropolis were

seldom the result of a deliberate decision, an express desire, or even less, of planning. This raises an interesting but ominous point about the importance of the time factor in the shaping of a town. How many decisions do we make today without foreseeing their consequences on the city in the year 2000? How many omissions will the citizens of the future blame on us? Who can tell whether apparently unattractive sites, still vacant today but earmarked for development, will not become tomorrow's havens, objects for the admiration of future generations of urban dwellers? The history of the Montreal squares brutally forces these questions upon us.

Let us analyze the case of Dominion Square: had it not been a cemetery - in fact, the Catholic cemetery for the victims of the 1832 cholera outbreak - and were it not for the campaign launched in 1869 by a health association for its conversion into a park following expropriation by the city, the most popular of our squares might have never existed. Its existence, incidentally, was on the verge of being ruled out before it even started, for the whole cemetery had already been parcelled out into building plots and the latter were on sale. Building was therefore completed on that part of the cemetery which originally extended to the west up to Stanley Street and also on that part to the east which was to become the site of the new St. James Cathedral.¹⁵

Dufferin Square, located on the south side of Dorchester Boulevard, between Jeanne-Mance and St-Urbain, and unfortunately converted today into a playground, was created in the same manner. From about 1799 to 1847, it was the site of a Protestant cemetery which was expropriated in 1871 at the cost of \$20,000 and converted into a square that the subsequent generations did not see fit to preserve.¹⁶ Papineau Square, in the east end of the town, was also originally a cemetery; today its condition leaves much to be desired.

Some of the most important squares owe their existence to the generosity of a few landowners. This is so in the case of Viger Square, the greater part of which was presented to the city in 1844 by P. Lacroix and by Jacques Viger, the first mayor of the municipality of Montreal. Other parcels of surrounding land were later purchased by the city and added to the original nucleus to become the square as we know it today. Viger Square's main attraction is the local flavour it adds to an otherwise dull part of the city.¹⁷ Beaver Hall and Phillips Square also owe their existence to the generosity of another mecaenas, Mr. Alfred Phillips, who presented it to the town in 1842. It should also be noted that a number of squares also came into being as a result of the disappearance of some original settlements: the land thus vacated was wisely preserved.¹⁸ This is how one of the most

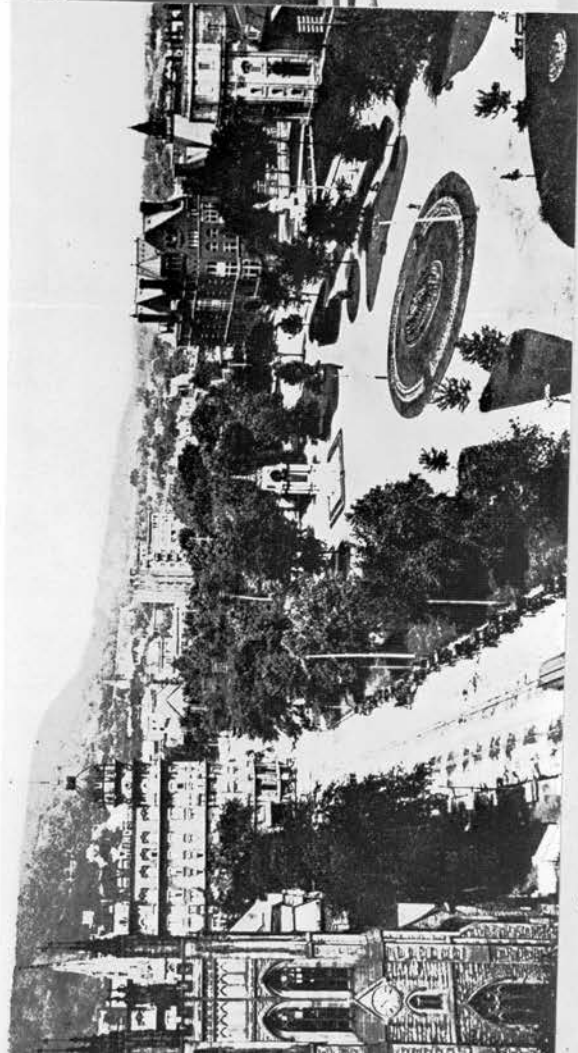
beautiful squares in Montreal, St. Louis Square, was created. Its magnificent site was first purchased in 1848 from the Belisle Estate for the reasonable amount of \$15,000. A water reservoir was planned for the site, to serve a community which, at the time, did not extend very far below Sherbrooke Terrace. In 1878, the plans for a reservoir were discarded and the site was converted into a public garden.

St - Louis Square and Dominion Square deserve special mention for they are marvelous illustrations of the Victorian urban legacy. St-Louis Square is a typical residential square of the romantic days; its general unity of style is reminiscent of the Georgian squares but its lavish ornamentation sets it quite apart. In spite of the unavoidable changes and deterioration it has suffered in the course of the years, the façades surrounding it are still vibrating under the ornamental profusion of their architectural details: outside staircases, heavily-arched porches, turrets of every kind, prying gable windows, bulging cornices. Whether on a sunny day or in the rain, in the morning or in the evening, one can almost breathe the floating fragrances of the past. The place is surrounded by a halo of antiquity which makes it one of the most interesting remains of the romantic urban architecture of the past century, wonderfully softened by its fuzzy crown of trees. (Pl. 69)

Dominion Square is even more Victorian for it does

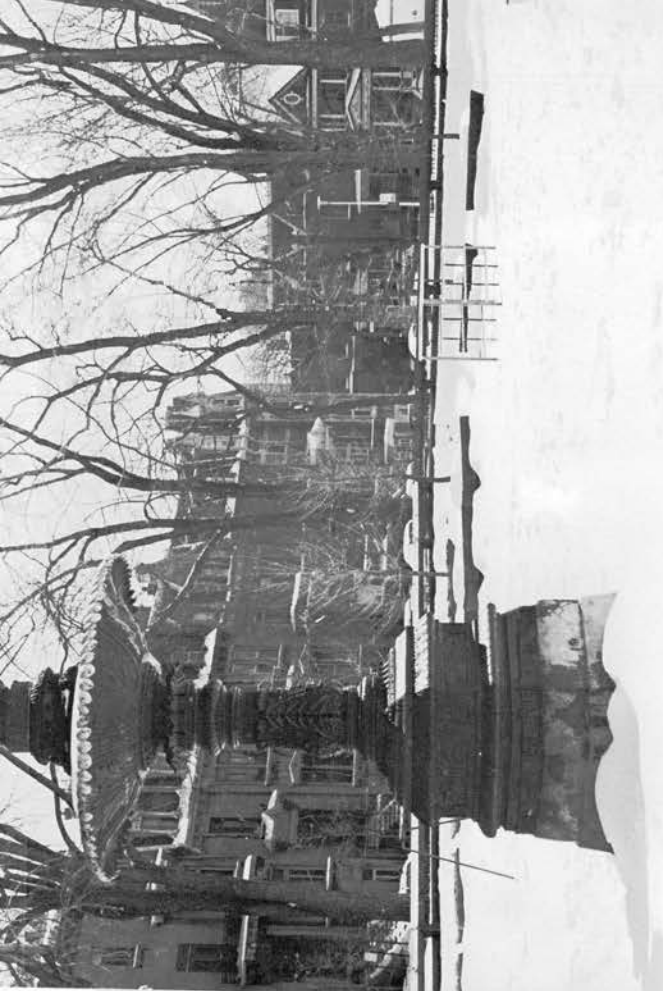
not even show a hint of Georgian formality. Like Trafalgar Square in London, it is surrounded by an impressive array of public buildings of various styles; here, however, they are at least related to each other by the fresh grounds on which they stand. Reflecting the taste of those days, it appears like an endearing city-size "bric-à-brac". (Pl. 67, 68 & 70)

Around this square is found the largest concentration of good public buildings, whether religious or commercial, that Victorian architecture ever produced in Montreal. All of them, without exception, have been either referred to or analyzed in the previous chapters. St. James Cathedral for instance is a crystallization of the neo-baroque trend introduced by Msgr. Bourget and perhaps the only copy in the world of the Basilica of St. Peter's in Rome. Windsor Station is unquestionably the most interesting monument in the square and also one of the monuments in Canada which best reflects the architectural vision of Henry Hobson Richardson. The very beautiful Church of St. George is one of the finer examples of neo-gothic monuments in Montreal or Canada. The now defunct Windsor Hotel was a distant reflection of Paris in the days of the "Second Empire". Dominion Square and the Sun Life buildings are two commercial buildings which are typically "Beaux-Arts" in their appearance. Today, Dominion Square has lost some of its glamour: the Windsor Hotel has been dynamited out



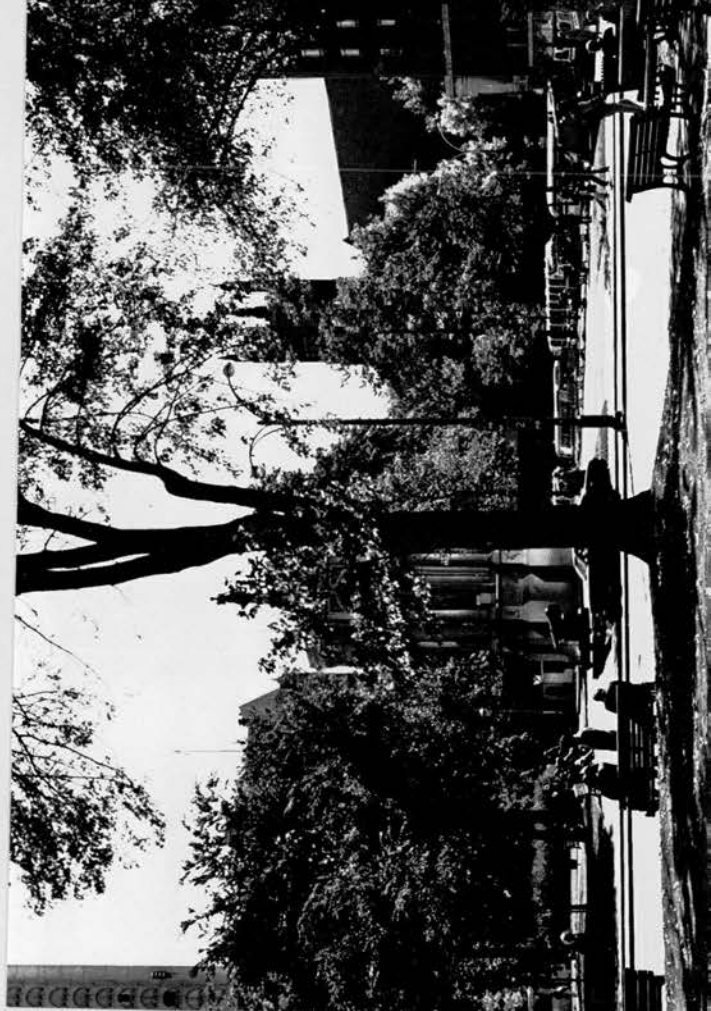
67. View of Dominion Square and Windsor Hotel, beginning of the 20th century.

68. View of Dominion Square and Windsor Station around 1930.



69. St-Louis Square, today.

70. Dominion Square, today.



of existence, and the neighbouring high-rises have not only considerably disparaged the cathedral's pride, and dwarfed Windsor Station's scale, but they have also disrupted the feeling of unity provided by the distribution of space around the square. In spite of all this and a somewhat constricting landscaping, this square remains the landmark it has been for a century; as a pole of attraction for all traffic it is a place that generates activities, and is one of the most authentic and magnificent environments in Montreal. Let us recall the impression of a group of visitors disembarking for the first time at Windsor Station, in 1920:

From the moment when first we emerged from the Windsor station and walked up to see the moonlight on the snow in Dominion Square and shining on the dome of St. James Cathedral, we began to be aware of an essence of place unlike any we had ever experienced before.¹⁹

5. The Park as a Legacy

The urban park is another legacy of the Victorian era. This is true of Montreal as well as of many other nineteenth century towns. We must remember that pre-industrial cities had no parks for the simple reason they did not need them; right beyond the ramparts, within 15 to 20 minutes walking distance, one could find the countryside, as always beautiful. A hundred years later, this happy balance was destroyed.

Urban development started to encroach on the natural environment at a frantic pace. Nature had retreated away from most citizens; it was no longer accessible by foot, on horseback, or even by tramway. It is at this point of time that urban parks appeared, in Montreal as elsewhere. They were created at the urging of philanthropists and social reformers who saw in them an antidote to the aggressive building trends and as a kind of health service, just as essential as aquaducts or sewer systems. We are not referring here to the small parks that one finds almost everywhere inserted in our grid of streets; these are residual rural plots that have escaped the urban tide by accident or by the stipulations made in a will. We are referring to the large natural park which constitutes a green oasis and is not only important for its romantic and picturesque landscape but also for its function as a soothing place of rest and leisure. At the turn of the century, there were three such parks in Montreal: Mount Royal Park, Lafontaine Park and St. Helen's Island Park.

The idea of a natural park originated with the English gardens, a great artistic innovation of the eighteenth century apparently initiated by William Kent (1684-1748). Then, around 1800, before anything of the kind appeared in America, the Crown, inspired by the writings and the work of Capability Brown, Claudius London, Sir Price, Repton, Knight and a few

others, presented the town of London with Regent Park.²⁰ It was, indeed, a magnificent and picturesque park, with a shape and landscape quite characteristic of the English park. To describe it briefly, the landscaping of this park, as that of English gardens in general, features a large undulating lawn spreading over a vast expanse interspersed with pathways that follow the curves of its natural topography and with trees and bushes which are left to grow in their natural condition.

Without wanting in any way to dispute the genius of Frederick Law Olmsted, we may take for granted that the concept of the natural park was brought to America from England and that Olmsted himself was subject to the English influence of which he was undeniably the best exponent. According to Mumford, his most personal contribution was to introduce in America the concept of a "creative landscape" and thus to help the town regain that part of nature it had lost in the course of its evolution.²¹

Montreal's British community, predominant at the time, was rich, powerful, and romantic. Since it was even more concerned than the British themselves with the achievements and the legacy of the mother country, one would be surprised if this community had not wished to provide the town with parks of that kind. Yet, the concept of the picturesque park was slow to evolve and while the concept itself was

imported from England, in actual fact it was the influence of the U.S.A. which was to prevail.

The English park aims at providing a natural and romantic setting and a sense of the picturesque as seen through the eyes and emotions of a painter. In America, this new concept did not at first materialize into large urban parks but into semi-rural cemeteries which were to be found in most larger towns. The landscaping of these cemeteries exerted a pre-dominant influence on the growing trend towards large urban parks, as well as on the actual planning of these parks and even on the plans for the development of certain suburbs.²² This is true of Montreal as well as of the large American cities. One might argue that long before the romantic cemeteries were ever designed, Montreal had had its large estates such as the McTavish and the McGill estates. These were private properties and, though they physically resembled parks, they were mainly created to fulfill the needs of the new upper middle class to be identified with the old symbols of aristocracy. These estates had little influence on the creation and planning of parks as a social facility designed for the benefit of the urban masses. This explains why until the second half of the nineteenth century, there is no park, in the present sense of the word, either in the United States or in Canada.

The first large American cemetery was built in Cambridge, Massachusetts, from 1831 onwards, on Mount Auburn. It had all the characteristics of the romantic lay-out, including natural ponds, undulating lawns, meandering paths, and clusters of trees and bushes planted at visually strategic places. Its influence was considerable: a short time later, Laurel Hill Cemetery in Philadelphia was created (1836), followed by Greenwood Cemetery in New York (1838). Laurel Hill in Philadelphia, incidentally, preceded by two decades, the creation, in 1855, of Fairmount Park, which is probably the first as well as one of the largest public parks in the U.S.A. Greenwood Cemetery in New York also preceded by several years the famed Central Park.²³ In Montreal, a similar situation prevailed: the big Protestant cemetery (1852) and the Catholic cemetery of Notre-Dame-des-Neiges (1855) were built on the hill some two decades before Mount Royal Park.

We can easily understand why a society bent on "laissez faire" and individual promotion would not have been particularly inclined to provide their towns with large natural parks for the welfare of the common man. Yet, this same society would spend enormous amounts of money and spare no effort to improve its cemeteries... They, in fact, became the first romantic parks in America, as well as major tourist attractions. Pamphlets published at the time in Montreal invite

tourists to visit the Catholic and Protestant cemeteries on Mount Royal and describe them as parks of the utmost interest. On the other hand, members of the clergy and devotees condemned this practice and urged the visitors to refrain from considering these places as tourist attractions, a fact which leads us to believe that the cemeteries were indeed attractive. In an era so full of great expectations, death may have appeared as the only unavoidable defeat; the natural reaction was to shut one's eyes and to camouflage reality. The idea must have gained popularity, for the records tell us that entertainment was frequent in those cemeteries, ranging from hunting parties to picnics.

It is interesting to note the way in which the society of that time perpetuated in its cemeteries the distinction of social classes as it prevailed in the world of the living. In a place where all should be equal to face common decay, we find the same social hierarchy, based on worldly possessions: for the poor, the common grave; for the rich, marble tombs. The superb landscaping of this realm of death made it the most romantic and picturesque place in Montreal, especially on the Protestant side. Yet, in spite of this, the city of the living with its patterns of settlement bears upon the city of the dead: the "haves" are not so crammed and they enjoy more green space than the "have-nots" who are regimented by

an orthogonal grid of paths!

Robert Furnaux Jordan suggested that the Victorian funeral architecture of Highgate and Brompton cemeteries in London is a world in itself and well worth a study.²⁴ We might discover that the necropolis is the reflection of the metropolis.

In spite of the fascinating aspects of the cemeteries on the hill and of the important role they played in awakening the people's interest in romantic landscaping and in emphasizing the need for public parks, the fact remains that they unfortunately took up the major part of a site which was unique and had all the necessary potential for the building of a large natural park. In 1852, a cemetery for the various Protestant denominations replaced the cemetery on Dorchester which had grown too small (it was later to become Dufferin Square). This new cemetery now covers over 250 acres. The Notre-Dame-des-Neiges cemetery of the Catholic community expanded even further. It started with a purchase of 115 arpents at the time of its inauguration in 1855. It was then considerably enlarged, first in 1865, then in 1872, and again in 1907 and 1909. By 1914, it covered over four hundred arpents.²⁵

Our southern neighbours exerted an even stronger influence on the creation of Montreal's public parks than on the layout of its romantic cemeteries. When the town

authorities decided to build on Mount Royal a large natural park copied from Central Park in New York, they hired the most eminent landscaping architect of the time to take on the task: Frederick Law Olmsted (1822-1903), an American who may rightly be considered as the father of landscaping architecture on this continent. While his fame remains linked with the the concept and completion of Central Park, he was also directly involved in the planning and development of the large urban parks of most of the big American cities, including Brooklyn, San Francisco, Albany, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, Buffalo, Boston, Washington, Louisville and Milwaukee. He also provided plans for regional parks, university campuses, urban communities and new towns. He managed to complete this considerable task in forty years of active life, crowning his achievements with a remarkable masterplan for the Chicago World Exhibition in 1893.²⁶

He worked on Mount Royal Park from 1873 to about 1881 and produced a fullscale masterplan, complete with all pertinent recommendations. It reflects all the great qualities which have made a masterpiece of Central Park, even though Olmsted had to work under much worse physical, political and economic conditions in Montreal. He displayed an innate sense of genius loci when he suggested to the Park Commissioners that the best way to use the potential of the site was to improve

on nature itself... "All that you have seen and admired of the old work of nature must be considered as simply suggestive of what that is practicable, suitable, and harmonious with your purposes of large popular use..."²⁷. His scrupulous respect for the natural topography of the place, and the way he conceived the project as a whole while keeping in mind the details, resulted in a very simple arrangement enhancing nature and providing splendid views while preserving privacy. This caused a visitor to say that "To walk in these woods of a snowy afternoon, alone, curtailed from the seethe and rumble of the streets below, is to believe illusion. It is impossible that escape from the milllion could be so easy."²⁸

The visionary approach of the park's developers and of its architect harbored some illusions as well. Olmsted explained this when he wrote the following:

With a little reflection it will be apparent that the property could not have been justly purchased with regard only for the profit to be got from it by a few thousands of the generation ordering it; and that I was bound in suggesting a plan, to have in view the interests of those to inherit it as well as yours; ... and also to remember that, if civilization is not to move backward, they (these inheritors) are to be much more alive than we are to certain qualities of value in the property which are to be saved or lost to them...²⁹.

Keeping in mind that Montreal's population in the 1870's numbered a scant 110,000 inhabitants and that the city had hardly reached the slopes of the hill, one must admit that it took both courage and foresight to expropriate some 450 acres of land at the cost of one million dollars (an astronomical sum at the time) and to hire the most renowned landscaping architect of America to plan it. (Pl. 71)

Nevertheless, the fact remains that by the scale of today's metropolis, Mount Royal Park is a small park. Even at its planning stage, compared with the fashionable romantic parks of the great capitals, Mount Royal, which barely covered 14% of the hill's surface, was one of the smallest, if not the smallest, among them. A few comparisons would make this clear: the Bois de Boulogne and the Bois de Vincennes in Paris, the Prater in Vienna, and Fairmount Park in Philadelphia, each cover more than 2,000 acres; Hyde park in London, Stanley Park in Vancouver, Belle Isle Park in Detroit, the Golden Gate Park in San Francisco and Forest Park in St. Louis total over 1,000 acres each; and Central Park in New York, one of the smallest in comparison with the parks just cited, covers about twice the surface of Mount Royal Park, with its 840 acres. Even more revealing, perhaps, is the fact that in 1912, all the parks in Montreal totalled 805 acres, an area still smaller than that of Central Park.³⁰ Moreover, during the past few years, the spare land of Mount Royal Park has constantly been encroached on either

side to make room for projects like Camillien Houde Avenue, or the Pine Park Avenue intersection. Such a park no longer reflects the vision of a great central park contemplated by the fathers of the city a hundred years ago. The present rate of growth and the dwindling of the green space potential might well turn Olmsted's warning into a prophecy:

If it (Mount Royal Park) is to be cut up with roads and walks, spotted with shelters, and streaked with staircases; if it is to be strewn with lunch papers, beer bottles, sardine cans and paper collars; and if thousands of people are to seek their recreation upon it unrestrainedly, each according to his special tastes, it is likely to lose whatever of natural charm you first saw in it.³¹

Contrary to Mount Royal Park, Lafontaine Park became a park almost by accident, thanks to its first use which allowed the land to be preserved in its natural state; this was also the case with many other places of public interest which are the pride of Montreal today. In October 1845, at a time when the pressures of urban development had not yet reached the heights of the Sherbrooke Terrace, the colonial government purchased the farm belonging to Mr. James Logan, in order to use it as a military training ground. It was not until 1888 that the federal government, subject to certain terms and conditions, and for a symbolic rent of one dollar per year, handed the land over to the municipality for the

purpose of building a park.

The landscaping of this park, with its two different styles is a fair reflection of the cultural duality of Montreal. There is the natural and picturesque arrangement in the manner of the English gardens, focused on a pond that follows the "twaleg" of a former brook. Then, east of Calixa-Lavallée Avenue, there is a "parc à la française", with linear alleys, smooth, flat lawns cut into geometric designs and carefully framed in by beautiful trees lined up in rows. The latter arrangement was allegedly designed by a French town-planner.³²

It is not so much for its landscaping arrangements, however, that Lafontaine Park is remarkable, but rather for its variety and because of the contrasting effects it provides against a built-up environment which happens to be particularly dense and uniform. Unfortunately, here, as in the case of Mount Royal Park, this previous quality is being eroded year after year by various kinds of undoubtedly very useful buildings which are nevertheless gradually undermining the primary character of both parks. Surely, it is a good thing to see them used and enjoyed but it would be much wiser to choose functions compatible with their specific character (such riding on Mount Royal Park and rowing in Lafontaine Park) instead of considering every bit of green space as a site

available for building facilities for any kind of sport or educational activities. These constitute perhaps the most accessible and the most precious heritage of the previous century and we should try to preserve them in their pristine condition in directing the pressure exerted by other kinds of activities towards other open spaces that do not fall into the same category.

Strangely enough, the retrieval of St. Helen's Island as a public park followed the same pattern as that of Lafontaine Park. Once the property of the Barons of Longueuil, the island was purchased in 1818 by the British government in order to set up a military base to protect Montreal, a fact which accounts for the military structures that are still to be found in that area. Around 1870, the island was handed over to the federal government which authorized the municipality of Montreal to convert the southeast part of it into a public park; the latter was inaugurated in 1874, to the general satisfaction of the public. In 1907, the island was no longer of any military interest and the city was able to purchase it for the fairly reasonable price of \$200,000. Following the construction, in 1930, of the Jacques-Cartier Bridge which was at last providing easy access to St. Helen's Island, the municipality decided to turn the whole island into a park and hired Landscaping Architect Frederick J. Todd. The work dragged on;

it was interrupted by the war, then resumed and finally completed in 1953, exactly 80 years after the island had first been opened to the public. The result lacked neither quality nor variety; it enhanced the unique location of the island and its romantic charm. This was to be shortlived for the destiny of St. Helen's Island was to take a new turn after it was selected to become the cornerstone of the 1967 World Fair. We shall return to this in Chapter Thirteen.³³

In brief, as we have learned from the previous chapter, the Victorian era was a boon for our city. The population explosion and urbanization, technical and economic progress, the harbour, the railways and tramways, the industrial areas of Ste-Anne, St-Henri, Hochelaga and the Square Mile, the first skyscrapers and the electric light... all belong to the Victorian era. Again, the monuments we most appreciate - Notre-Dame, Christ Church, Bonsecours Market, the Bank of Montreal and the City Hall are Victorian. So are the urban, industrial, commercial or domestic landscapes that we most often encounter. Most of the problems facing the metropolis today, from downtown congestion to decay in the overpopulated areas, find their roots in the era of "laissez-faire". To characterize this age is therefore no easy task, all the more so since it is still prevailing in a certain way, and especially in the attitude of our government. Yet, whichever way we assess that

period, we cannot ignore the fact that it was largely responsible for what has become of Montreal today. We should perhaps not pass too harsh a judgment on this era, for while it is true that with the 1850's came the realization that Montreal was in need of large public projects, that would combine esthetics and efficiency, if it was to become a city in the full sense of the word, it is equally true that it took but a few decades to see cemeteries, squares and public parks bring a sophisticated if only partial answer to the objectives of the Victorian era.³⁴

PART IV

MONTREAL IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Quelle est cette ville
 Grandissant au rythme des pulsations électroniques
 Montréal qui s'étend comme un vol d'insectes
 A la recherche de l'oiseau d'Amérique
 Ville fleuve au lit indolent
 Océanique enfance des banlieues
 Ville parc anx balançoires
 Tendues d'enfants libres
 Montréal île laissée là ou s'achève la course aux
 terres neuves
 Montréal investie comme la porte cochère
 D'une froide Amérique
 Montréal inlassable
 Bâtie à coups de bourse
 Sans urbaniste sans architecte
 Minerai brut coulé sur le sable
 des fonderies de grands villages
 Montréal la gaillarde
 Sans robe ni bijou
 Etalant sa jeune nudité
 Sous le néon des auréoles
 Montréal Acropole
 D'un prince fou semeur de briques et d'aluminium
 (...)

Michel Régnier¹

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE METROPOLIS

It is, indeed, neither city nor country... No longer can it be identified from the outside by its silhouette, clearly set off from the surrounding fields. No longer can it be comprehended from the inside as a system of clearly defined spaces of plazas and streets. It appears as chaos... Hans Blumenfeld.²

1. A New Reality

In many respects, Montreal today is no longer the Victorian city we have analyzed in the previous chapter. It has gradually dissolved into an ever-growing area and has grown into a metropolis. The subject matter of the present chapter is to pinpoint these changes and to find out their causes. A bold ambition indeed for a few pages... we shall therefore deal only with aspects that are most likely to reveal the characteristics of the present evolution of Montreal.

During the twentieth century we can witness, in Quebec as well as almost anywhere else, a marked acceleration in the trend towards urbanisation. In 1901, 36.1% of the population in the province of Quebec lived in the city; in 1971, this percentage had more than doubled, reaching 80.6% according to some projections, in the year 2000 it is expected to be around 90 or 95%.³ Most of the increase has been absorbed by

Montreal and the surrounding region: in 1941; 48.6% of the total population of Quebec was living in the Greater Montreal area; in 1961, this percentage rose to 52.4%. As for the city itself, we note that in 1901 it numbered 267,730 citizens. In 1971, the latter figure had risen to over one million (1,214,352) following the demographic growth, the various migrations, as well as the extension of the political and official boundaries resulting from annexations. The urban acceleration has been even more spectacular in the Montreal area, and by this we mean all the territory which the Montreal City Planning Department regards as revolving around the hub of the city's downtown economic, social, and cultural activities. Within the span of two decades, from 1941 to 1961, the population of the area increased by almost 70%, jumping from 1,618,000 to 2,757,000. At this rate, we may forecast a figure of 7,000,000 for Greater Montreal before the end of the century.⁴

Trade and communications constitute the true boundaries of this vast area. Its actual borders seem to constantly vary, but the reach of the metropolitan radio and television stations or of the written press seem to provide a better measure of the area. Boundaries can also be determined by the perimeter within which wholesalers distribute perishable goods, by the extent of bus and telephone services, or by the maximum distance suburban dwellers are prepared to

commute everyday. At present, the area covers a circular surface of about 2,179,000 acres, with a 30 mile radius starting from Dominion Square in the centre and extending, at the periphery, to municipalities as far away as St-Jérôme in the north, St -Hyacinthe in the east, St-Jean d'Iberville in the south, and Valleyfield in the west.⁵

In 1961, the Montreal City Planning Department identified in the heart of the area a more densely populated sector commonly known as Metropolitan Montreal: it is the economic driving force of the whole region. It is an entity encompassing at the present time the islands of Montreal, Jésus, Bizard and Perrot: some territory from the counties of Vaudreuil (municipality of Dorion), Deux-Montagnes (municipalities of St-Eustache, Deux-Montagnes), Terrebonne (municipalities of Ste-Thérèse and Rosemère), l'Assomption (municipality of Repentigny), Châteauguay and the major part of the counties of Laprairie and Chambly. This inner zone is a world in itself, a social economic, cultural and spatial reality transcending the political and official boundaries of its municipalities, whether they be Laval, Mount Royal, Pierrefonds, Lasalle or Longueuil. Due to the incredibly rapid growth of its population and to the latter's distribution over an increasingly large territory, Montreal today emerges as a new reality: a metropolis.⁶

The word "metropolis" in the present case, has obviously nothing to do with Montreal's claim to being the most populated city in Canada today. Rather, it applies to a change in the very essence of the Montreal area. It means that Montreal has reached yet another stage of its development, a stage that Blumenfeld and Gottman, together with many other knowledgeable experts, do not hesitate to consider as revolutionary.

Indeed, the metropolis is not simply a more impressive or a more complicated version of the traditional industrial city, for the well-defined settlement patterns of the Victorian city and its clear-cut limits have been replaced by totally different patterns and by a characteristic absence of limitations in general. The idea, for instance, of developing densely populated residential areas such as those of Plateau Mont-Royal, or of setting up retail business along trafficways such as Ste-Catherine, Mont-Royal or St-Hubert Streets is now a thing of the past. The fringe of the present urban area presents quite a different picture: the urban fabric is very loose and the population ratio very low; the settlement pattern is uniform and services are concentrated in impersonal centres which are poorly, if at all, intergrated into the urban mesh. What has happened?

The nineteenth century industrial city was the

product of technical and economic revolutions which had fostered, among others, the telegraph, the locomotive, the steamboat, as well as mass production. This contributed to increased inter-city mobility and led to the concentration of all activities in privileged centres like Montreal. Yet, because it lacked adequate means of urban transport and communication, nineteenth century Montreal still retained its own internal boundaries and the lack of accessibility and mobility influenced the structure of the city. This explains why the first industrial areas in Montreal, such as Ste-Anne, St-Henri, Hochelaga, and others developed along natural or artificial inter-city thoroughfares. That is also why the workforce lived in the immediate vicinity of industries and manufactures.

In the twentieth century, however, telephone, radio and television have made communications instantaneous. The tramway and the bus, followed by the subway, have increased the mobility of the citizens. In the large cities of North America, elevators which carry more people daily than any other means of transport, have replaced the staircase and its inherent limitations. Lastly, versatile trucks and automobiles have become the prime means of individual and commercial transport. The achievements of modern technology have liberated the town from its ancestral limitations, transformed communications and increased the intra-urban mobility of people and goods.

As town planner Hans Blumenfeld has demonstrated, the creation of the metropolis is the result of the interaction of two major forces: a centripetal, inter-city force, which tends to concentrate economic activities and population in the Montreal area and a centrifugal intra-urban force which tends to redistribute the population within the very same area.⁷ We shall consider the effects of the latter force in the following pages; but first, let us take a look at Montreal today as a pole of attraction.

While at the national level it has now come to share its metropolitan prerogatives with Toronto, which managed to take the economic leadership, at the provincial level Montreal remains an unchallenged giant. Without indulging in too many statistics, let us simply remember that from 1941 to 1961 the rate of increase of the Greater Montreal population rose proportionately faster than in the province of Quebec or even in Canada.⁸ As in the nineteenth century, it is obvious that such a considerable increase cannot be attributed to the birthrate alone and that immigration, and notably migration from the countryside must have played an important role. In 1961, the number of rural migrants arriving daily in the metropolis was estimated at about one hundred.⁹

Several factors have contributed to maintain the dynamism of the metropolis. The creation of the St. Lawrence

seaway (1954-1959) opened the way to the huge commercial markets of Chicago, Detroit, Toronto, Buffalo and others, confirming the traditional position of Montreal as a centre for unloading and distributing freight. At the beginning of the century, about one thousand ships, totalling a few million tons entered our port; in 1965, the National Harbours Board quoted 6,318 arrivals for a total of 21,646,140 tons.¹⁰ In a similar fashion, the development of commercial airlines has contributed to Montreal's position as a pole of attraction. The city is the world capital of aviation, having been selected as the headquarters of the International Civil Aviation Organization and of the International Air Transport Association. Once the airport at Ste-Scholastique is completed, the city will be provided with one of the most impressive airports in the world. Furthermore, the development of a modern road-network undertaken in the past few years is an incentive to the concentration of industries in our area. The availability of inexpensive and abundant hydro-electric power and the presence of a large and willing labour force ready to adjust to new techniques, are conducive to the introduction of more elaborate production systems.

2. A New Pattern of Industrial Settlement

In the Victorian city, as we already know, industries followed a very simple pattern of settlement. Those

involved in processing raw materials, such as metalwork industries, sugar refineries, flour mills and textiles mills settled along the port, Lachine Canal and the railways. The secondary industries, such as tanneries, textiles and tobacco factories were less dependent on heavy transport and thus settled where both labour and a market were available. As for the service industries, as yet little developed, they were confined to the Coteau St-Louis with a few extensions in the direction of the main railway stations.

With the improvement of intra-urban means of communication and transport, and with the acquisition of new sources of energy, namely petrol and electricity, this pattern of industrial settlement has now become more complex.

While certain industries of the primary group - the petrol refineries of Montreal and of Montreal East, for example - remain dependant on the railways and the port, others especially in the secondary sector, avail themselves of the new means of communication and sources of energy to settle wherever they have a better chance of maximizing their efficiency and their profits. Nowadays, their pattern of settlement is influenced by various factors such as: the availability of space required by modern production methods (in view of foreseeable expansion); the wish to avoid congestion and to escape the taxes levied in the central urban zones; the need to minimize

transport costs and to be closer to the customers, to available manpower and to complementary industries; or, lastly, the existence of private or municipal industrial parks, adequately served by the new intra-urban communication network, etc.¹¹

Since World War II, these industries, as a whole, show a definite trend towards settling along the main thoroughfares of the island and of the region, such as the Laurentian autoroute, the Transcanadian, the Metropolitan Boulevard, Côte-de-Liesse Road, or the Montreal-Toronto Road. Besides, the road often complements the other means of transport. Such is the case of the Côte-de-Liesse sector which is about to become one of the main industrial zones of the metropolis thanks to its position near Dorval airport, and the railway and highway network.¹²

An interesting aspect of the pattern of industrial settlement is the recurrence of the traditional axial trends engraved in the geography of the Montreal territory. Here again, the island's old vocation as a key to the West is more re-asserted through this new communication network viz. the Transcanadian and the Metropolitan Boulevard. Moreover, as already demonstrated in many cases, the layout of this modern infra-structure of expressways often exactly, or almost exactly, duplicates that of the old King's Ways built on the "côtes" at the very beginning of the colonial settlement.

Such is the case, for instance, for the major part of the Transcanadian Highway, the Metropolitan Boulevard and Côte-de-Liesse Road.

In spite of the essential part it played in the development of Greater Montreal, we must remember that the processing industry only accounts for about one-third of the labour force today. From 1940 onwards, it would be surpassed by the service industry which would include public and private administration, transport and communications, banking, financial and commercial activities, hotels, education, research, culture and recreation. A glance at the Central Business District would demonstrate the importance for Montreal of this tertiary sector and its impact on the urban fabric. Its boundaries, as set by the Montreal City Planning Department are: Pine Avenue to the north, St-Denis Street to the east, the River and Lachine Canal to the south and Guy Street to the west. This very large territory of some 1,325 acres, is the most important in the metropolis because of the quality, the quantity and the variety of businesses established within its boundaries. It sets the tone for the whole Montreal area.¹³

The district grew gradually, horizontally as well as vertically. At the end of the Victorian era, the financial and commercial business sector was still confined to the old Coteau St-Louis and was mainly centered around

Notre-Dame and St. James Streets. It was to assume a new dimension with the construction of the large railway stations of Viger, Bonaventure and Windsor, which, by attracting hotels and other related activities, gave it a new start. Around the same time, in 1892, Birks and Morgan, soon followed by other dynamic merchants, moved their premises to Ste-Catherine Street. As early as 1910, Ste-Catherine Street became the main commercial thoroughfare in town; until then it had been almost exclusively residential. The business district was not split into two sections: the financial transactions remained centered around St. James Street, while commercial firms flocked to Ste-Catherine Street.

Today, the most striking feature of this area is its heavy concentration of high-rises; it is perhaps the most spectacular development in Montreal in the twentieth century. The impact of those skyscrapers on the image and the identity of our metropolis is probably just as significant as the impact of industry had been on the Victorian city. The figures indicating the increase in the floor space available in the business area for the service industry speak for themselves. Floor space in office buildings increases by 77% between 1949 and 1962, leaping from 11.4 to 20.2 million square feet. Floor space for administrative and government functions increased by 31%, rising from 3.6 to 4.7 million square feet. For the same

period, hotels added about 2 million square feet to an estimated 2.7 million square feet, for an increase of 53%. Cultural and recreational activities show a similar increase of 32%.¹⁴

The concentration of all these functions is the result of a combination of several factors. Because such functions cater to a sizeable regional, national and even international market, they have to be grouped in a place of maximum accessibility like the downtown area. Factors like prestige and the fact that each business benefits directly or indirectly from the presence of other businesses also come into play. In the case of certain functions, such as administration or finances, centralization is a prerequisite for optimum efficiency. In this respect, what location could be better than the heart of downtown, which reaches out to every part of the metropolis? Efficiency demands centralization and the concentration of business activities; this latter aspect is obviously reflected in the size of the downtown buildings.

This double feature of concentration and centralization is certainly not unique to Montreal. It is found in Toronto, in Chicago and in New York as well. What is typical of Montreal, however, is the fact that these functions tend to gather downtown around the public squares inherited from the past centuries. This trend is by no means recent. The large stations, Viger and Windsor, date back to the end of the

previous century when they were built on Viger Square and Dominion Square respectively. The first high-rise built in Montreal, the New York Life Insurance Company (a skyscraper in those days), which today houses the main branch of the Société de Fiducie du Québec, was built in 1887, on the old Place d'Armes. It was to be matched some decades later by the Aldred Building, bordering on the same square. Meanwhile, the Windsor Hotel, a prestigious building for its time, was being built on the west side of Dominion Square. It was soon to be followed on the same square by the two largest commercial buildings of the beginning of the century: the Sun Life Building and the Dominion Square Building. Between 1892 and 1894, Birks and Morgan, the two firms which were to stimulate the commercial development of Ste-Catherine Street settled on Phillips Square.

Following the economic boom of the fifties, these public squares have become more and more attractive as places of prestige, with the result that downtown business is now heavily concentrated around those urban spaces. As a matter of fact, functions concentrated in the Central Business District, and indicating a floor space index of 4.0 and over are mainly located around those squares.¹⁵ Without making an exhaustive list of such buildings, let us mention the Bank of Montreal and the "Banque Canadienne Nationale" Buildings on Place d'Armes,

the Court House at the far end of the Champ-de-Mars, the Stock Exchange Tower on Victoria Square, and on the periphery of Dominion Square, Place du Canada, the Laurentian Hotel and the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce.

Not all business functions are located around such prestigious sites. As we shall find out in the next chapter, the acquisition of building rights above the former railway installations located in the downtown area have had some influence on the latter's renovation. The widening of Dorchester Street (1955) formerly a residential street, changed it into a traffic boulevard; it was a determining factor in the development of this new commercial canyon with its tall landmarks such as the Hydro-Québec Building, CIL House, the Queen Elizabeth Hotel and others. Thus, we may consider the regrouping of those great promoters of activities around the public squares of our past as a specific pattern of the Montreal downtown area.

3. A New Residential Pattern

The changes in the pattern of industrial settlement in the course of the twentieth century are paralleled by similar changes in the type of dwellings and in their pattern of settlement. In the nineteenth century, the rich used to build their houses wherever they pleased while the working-class tended to congregate in areas close to employment

opportunities. Railways and waterways had contributed to some extent towards the structure of the new urban satellites such as Lachine or Hochelaga-Maisonneuve. However, the development of an intra-urban mass transport system, the steady growth of the population, fluctuating foreign immigration, and the uninterrupted flow of rural migration would soon generate residential areas which became the working-class suburbs of the time. The population of these suburbs which were distributed as a crescent around a buffer zone of pauperism surrounding the old city, increased to a high density as a result of the limitations of mass transport, whether horse-drawn or electric-driven. Our analysis, in this connection, of the built-up areas of Plateau Mont-Royal with their typical dwellings leads us to believe that they are truly representative of the patterns of residential settlement prevailing at the end of the previous century.

It is very obvious that radical changes have taken place when we compare the previous century's residences to today's downtown residential towers and suburban detached family units. These changes may be attributed to the improvements in intra-urban means of transport and communications, to the subway, the bus, the telephone, the radio, the television, and, above all, to the automobile and a modern network of roads. Within the span of two decades, i.e. from 1951 to

1971, the percentage of households owning a car in the metropolitan area has more than doubled, increasing from 27.8% to 68.1%. This revolution in communications was undeniably a cause of prime importance but it shares with other factors the responsibility for changes in the types of dwellings and in the patterns of settlement.¹⁶

Thus, the gradual changes in the structure of the family constitute the factor which most contributed to alter the Victorian type of dwelling. Indeed, in the course of the last decades, the family cell has considerably shrunk, in the sense that the number of people living under the same roof has continually decreased. Several causes account for this trend, among which falling birth-rates and the erosion of family tradition are the most commonly mentioned. However, the overall rise of income levels and social benefits also contributed to the fragmentation of the old monolithic family structure. Thus, early marriages became more frequent. In Canada, in 1941, the percentage of married individuals over the age of 15 was 57%; in 1961, it had risen to 66%. The same factor resulted in the gradual decrease of the "three-generation" or "double family" living under the same roof. Their number has almost been halved in Montreal, between 1951 and 1961. Another factor which is also related to the increase in incomes and social benefits is the growing number of

non-family households, made up of individuals living alone, whether young or old, bachelors, widows, or divorcees, who have decided to live on their own.¹⁷

As a consequence of the growing number of small households there was a growing need for small, compact and well-equipped units for occupants who would normally be busy working elsewhere and would thus be unable to spare much time for their maintenance. These units are generally located in the city, near the city centre, or along main roadways providing fast access to the city centre. Indeed, young people or adults without any dependent do not feel the urge to live in spacious suburbs as much as the need for easy access to work, not to mention the fascination exerted by the downtown area. Indeed, from 1951 to 1961, the increase in the number of non-family households in the municipality of Montreal alone was three times that of the corresponding increase in the rest of the metropolitan area. Furthermore, in 1961, almost 25% of the town's population was made up of individuals who were living independently from their family.¹⁸ Of course, lone individuals are not the only ones who live by choice in densely urbanized surroundings; this trend is partly shared by small families of two or three. However, as the size of the family grows this trend decreases; as we shall see later.

The demand for small housing units resulted in a

gradual transformation of the large houses inherited from the Victorian era. The remodelling of large units into several compact ones is now common practice, especially in the urban area which are preferable because of their easy access to the downtown area, the charm of their surroundings and the quality of their traditional buildings; these advantages are somewhat offset by the parallel pressure of property taxes. Of the large residences built on the old "Square Mile" or in its neighbourhood, very few have escaped these renovations.¹⁹ Here, we need no statistics: the facts speak for themselves. Those residences are unfortunately but quite expectedly rapidly deteriorating; this is due to the increase in the density of population and to the lack of interest on the part of tenants and landlords alike.

This is only one aspect of the situation. The thrust of the residential towers is, visually, even more dramatic. Real estate corporations and speculators prefer investing in modern high-rise apartments rather than converting traditional residences because the prospects for the land on which the latter are built are often much greater than the potential dollar value of these old structures. In the better urban sectors, the price of land, per square foot, is often higher than the gross price of the equivalent floor space for traditional construction. On the other hand, the use of new building

techniques using steel and concrete, of new heating and ventilation systems, and of powerful electric elevators, have made the construction of very high buildings possible, thus bringing down the price of land per square foot to 10 to 50% of the price of the gross floor space of these high-rises.²⁰

It is interesting to note the permanent influence of the older structures and former patterns of settlement on the establishment of the new residential high-rises. Thus, for instance, Sherbrooke Street, which had been the most fashionable street of the last century (towards the west end in particular), has attracted a great many of these high-rises. The oldest among these are Le Château, the Linton, the Acadian, while Cantlie House, Le Cartier and Port-Royal are among the most recently built. Côte-des-Neiges Road is another characteristic artery; built at the beginning of the colony, it has been adorned during the last fifty years with many of these towers, and the most architecturally successful are probably the Rochhill Apartments completed towards the end of the sixties.

The selected abode of the wealthy Victorians, the old Square Mile was not spared the invasion of the high-rises either. The exceptional qualities of this hillside location, its proximity to the main traffic arteries, to the subway and better still, to the downtown area with its active life and entertainment, have attracted a fauna of people

interested in living right in the heart of the city; this eventually induced the municipal authorities to pass zoning regulation no 2812, promoting housing on the site - unavoidably high profit lodgings - and banning any other function. This explains why traditional streets, remarkable for their picturesque surroundings, such as Ste-Famille, Hutchison and Durocher Streets, are losing their scale and character. This erosion can only grow worse, especially if projects such as Concordia City do materialize. Parks have become another urban structure inherited from the previous centuries which are now attracting residential high-rises. Lafontaine Park, which will soon be almost surrounded by high-rises, is a point in case.

The development of high-rises as a favoured type of housing resulting from drastic changes in the family structure and their concentration in certain appropriate sectors of the town, constitute one of the two basic aspects of residential settlement in the metropolis. Opposing this centripetal force, a centrifugal force tends to channel a considerable number of families towards the detached single family units in the suburbs.

Consider the following data: in 1941, two-thirds of the population of the Montreal region was still living within a four-mile radius from the centre. In 1961, the same population would be spread over an eight-mile radius. The

expansion follows a pattern of concentric zones gradually encroaching on the surrounding countryside. Between 1941 and 1951, the highest rate of increase was found in areas located between 4 to 6 miles away from the centre, where the population more than doubled. In the course of the following decade the increase was mainly felt in areas extending between 5 to 19 miles from the centre, where the population grew by some 146%.²¹

Unfortunately, it is the large rural plain of Montreal, an area with the best farming land in the province, which is bearing the brunt of the steady progression of construction. In 1941, a Montreal citizen could still enjoy all the low-density characteristics of countryside-living at the limits of a nine-mile radius from the centre. A mere twenty years later, he had to travel up to 25 miles to find the same rural environment.²² This is not just due to the increase in the urban population; it also reflects a more liberal use of the land which is the direct result of land speculation. In 1964, it took twice as many acres of land - i.e. 96 acres - to absorb a population increase of 1000, compared to 50 acres in 1952.²³ Such low-density expansion gradually contributed to bring down the average population density in the metropolitan zone and on the Montreal island, in spite of the increasing concentration of small households and families in urban

residential high-density towers. This fact is demonstrated by the following figures: for the total metropolitan area, the population density fell from 32 residents per acre in 1907 to 28 in 1961. A similar downward trend applies to the island of Montreal: 33 residents per acre in 1907 and only 28 in 1961.²⁴

This overflow towards the outskirts and the gradual decrease in density are mainly due to the settlement in the suburbs of middle and large-size families. For many years now, statistics indicate that the larger the size of the households, the more they tend to move away from the centre of town towards the periphery.²⁵ One last figure: in 1961, residents under the age of 20 accounted for almost half of the population of the metropolitan area outside the boundaries of the municipality of Montreal.²⁶

Middle and large-size families are said to be attracted by the suburbs because the latter provide a better environment for the children's education. However, there is a more basic reason: they are now easily accessible by cars and other means of rapid transport which have improved the mobility of people and goods and reduced distances. Again, these reasons should be assessed in relation to other factors which have encouraged the exodus towards the urban outskirts.

Undeniably, the gradual improvement in the standards of living of the middle-class have enabled it to enjoy

private ownership. This usually takes the form of a standard detached family unit on a 50 to 60 x 90 or 130 feet lot. Indeed, large size families who do not normally follow this migration pattern are usually forced by their low income to remain in older areas, the only ones to provide large housing at a low cost.²⁷ On the other hand, for the average income families, privacy as well as space around the house for the children are cheaper on the metropolitan periphery than in the town itself where density is higher and land more expensive. Real estate firms and speculators have been taking advantage of this situation and, through extensive use of the press, radio, and television media, have managed to create and maintain the myth of the suburb and of the suburbanite. One might object that as time goes by, the benefits of living in the suburbs dwindle to the point of being often cancelled out by the cost of commuting and by the absence of adequate social and cultural facilities. True as this may be, the image of private lawns, garden parties, schools set in parks and neat and functional shopping centres is deeply rooted and cultivated in the consumer's mind. Publicity and speculation are joint partners in this venture and it would be an error to ignore them as factors in the migration of families towards the periphery.

Among other factors which have influenced this migration, we should mention the gradual decrease in the amount

of time devoted to productive work. The time that a suburbanite is now able to devote to enjoying and maintaining his residential environment justifies his investment and makes up for the hours wasted in commuting. Tunnard and Reed point out that, in the U.S.A., the suburbs have remained the privilege of the rich up to about 1930, that is, until the 40-hour week became a universal practice and replaced the 60-hour week still generally enforced in the first decades of the twentieth century.²⁸

At first sight, the peripheral expansion of the detached unit does not seem to follow any definite plan or structure; it only appears to have been ruled by the speculators' and contractors' interests. However, a closer scrutiny shows that the areas of concentration as well as the axial parameters were determined by the initial network of townships and villages as well as by the network of communications linking the latter. The simple fact, for instance, that there was a circular road surrounding Montreal island and connecting the older settlements has obviously contributed, from World War II onwards, to extend the suburban expansion to the island's periphery, before the centre was even fully settled.

Once better communications were established with the centre of Montreal, new suburban residential settlements, which had so far depended on the services of communities began

to develop at an incredible pace. The many bridges connecting the island to the mainland played a definite role in the expansion of budding communities such as Chomedey, Laval-des-Rapides, Pont-Viau, Duvernay and the great Laurentian axial way (Vimont, Ste-Thérèse, St-Jérôme, etc.) as well as Longueuil, St-Lambert, St-Bruno, Brossard, etc. on the south shore. The latter only started prospering after the inauguration of Harbour Bridge (Jacques-Cartier Bridge) in May 1930. Today, with a subway station as its bridgehead, Longueuil has practically become a suburb of downtown Montreal.

Even though it was guided by existing structures, this kind of uncontrolled expansion had one negative result: it disrupted once and for all the balance achieved on the island and in the metropolitan area, between the "tight" and the "spread-out" patterns of habitation. Erosion and uniformity, a process which began with the industrial era, have now reached their logical conclusion: an amorphous urban magma, devoid of any structure or identity is now threatening to engulf whatever is left of the rural space and landscape. A dissolving tide which has already destroyed the charm of the old island villages such as Pointe-aux-Trembles, Sault-au-Récollet, Ste-Geneviève, Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue, Pointe-Claire or St-Laurent is not undermining the identity of still more distant communities including St-Eustache, Boucherville and Laprairie. This

is the price we have to pay for real estate speculation, a price we are only too inclined to forget. (Fig. 17 to 26)

4. Attempts at Planning

Considering the powerful and contradictory trends, whether centripetal or centrifugal, which are now shaping our urban world, we wonder if urban planning played any part in the development of our modern metropolis. Although scientific city-planning is a product of the twentieth century, it seems to have reached Canada somewhat later than other countries. As a matter of fact, it did not play any major role in the case of Montreal. A few preliminary attempts at drafting guide lines never really resulted in any compulsory plan. A short analysis of these attempts might throw some light on the matter.

There are, in the course of Montreal's history, some local developments which were indeed planned ahead and which demonstrate at least some concern for organization. Dollier de Casson, for instance, had drafted a kind of masterplan for the city on Coteau St-Louis. Similarly, the Commissioners, when requested to pull down the eighteenth century fortifications, produced a plan for the renovation of the sectors concerned. We shall see, in the following chapter, that the most spectacular development achieved in Montreal in the twentieth century, i.e. the creation of a new downtown centre, was

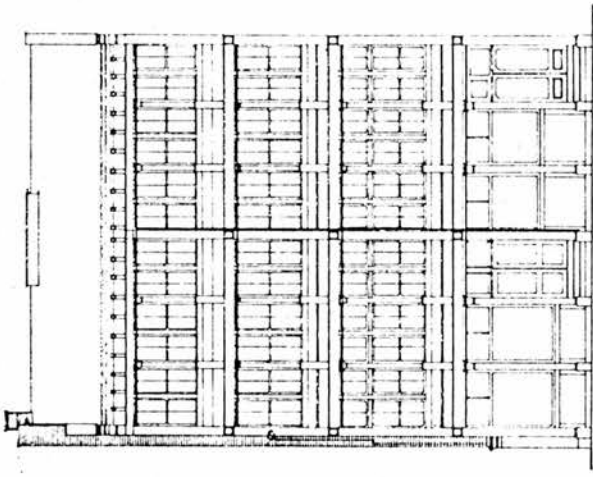
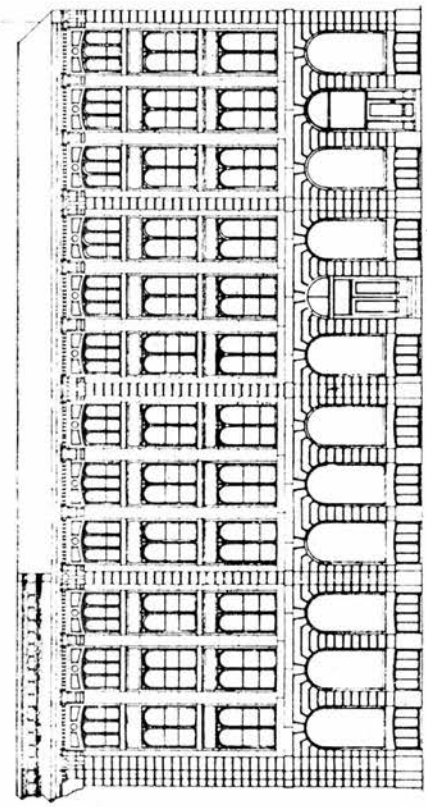
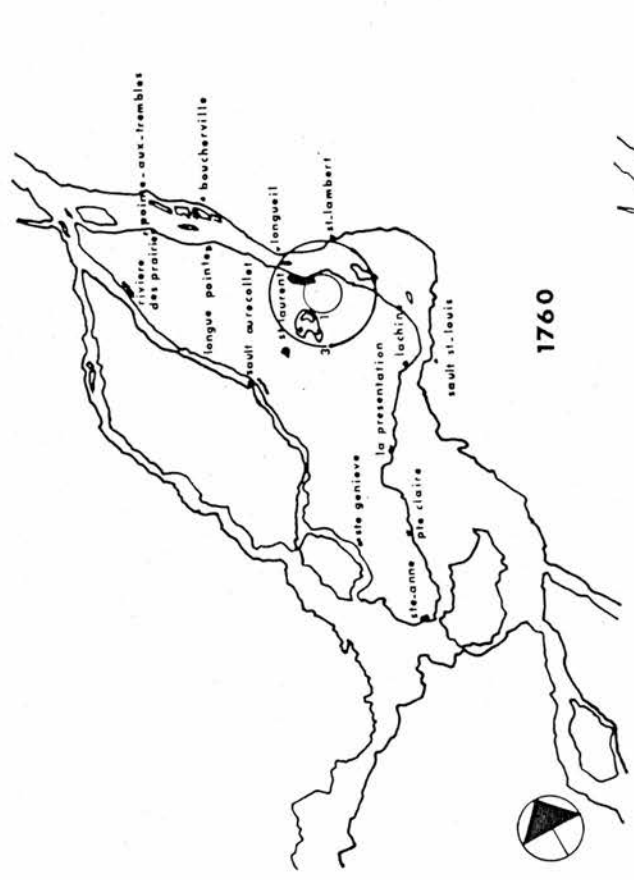


Fig. 15 Commercial building, 400-402 St-Paul St. west. Combination of cast-iron elements and stonework on the façade.

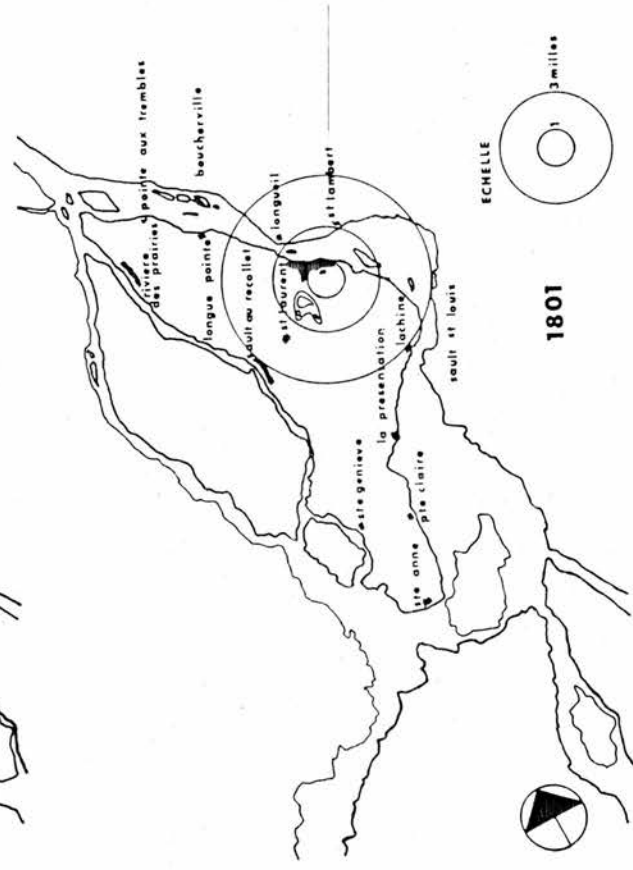
Fig. 16 The warehouses built from 1866 onwards on the site of the old Hôtel-Dieu of Jeanne-Mance. Partial view of the façade on St-Paul Street.



870 850



1760



1801

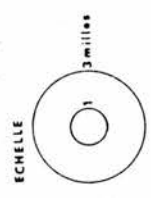


Fig. 17 and 18 Urban growth.

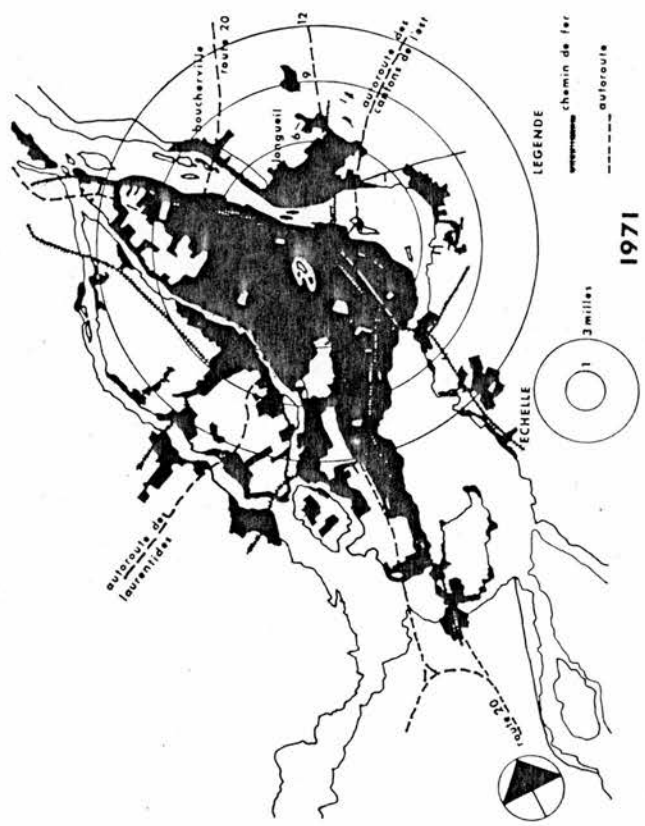


Fig. 25 Urban growth.

Fig. 26 Region and zones of Montreal.

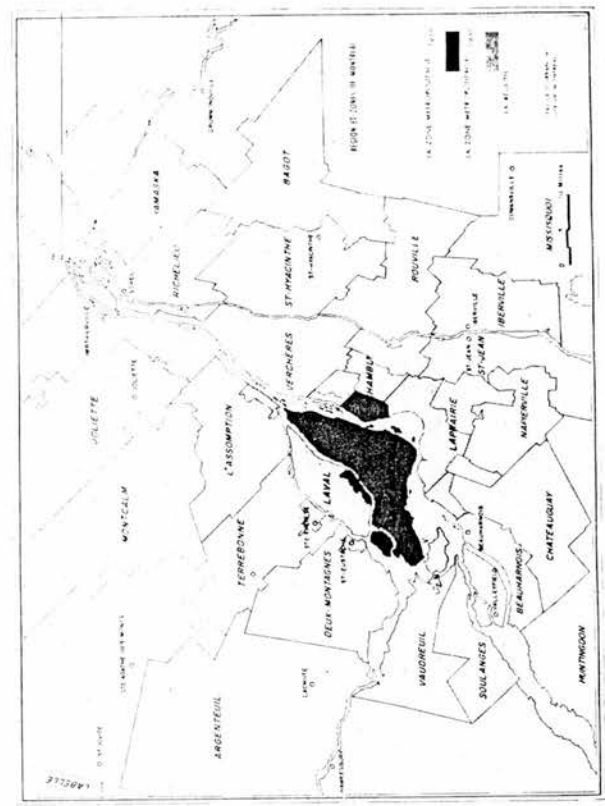
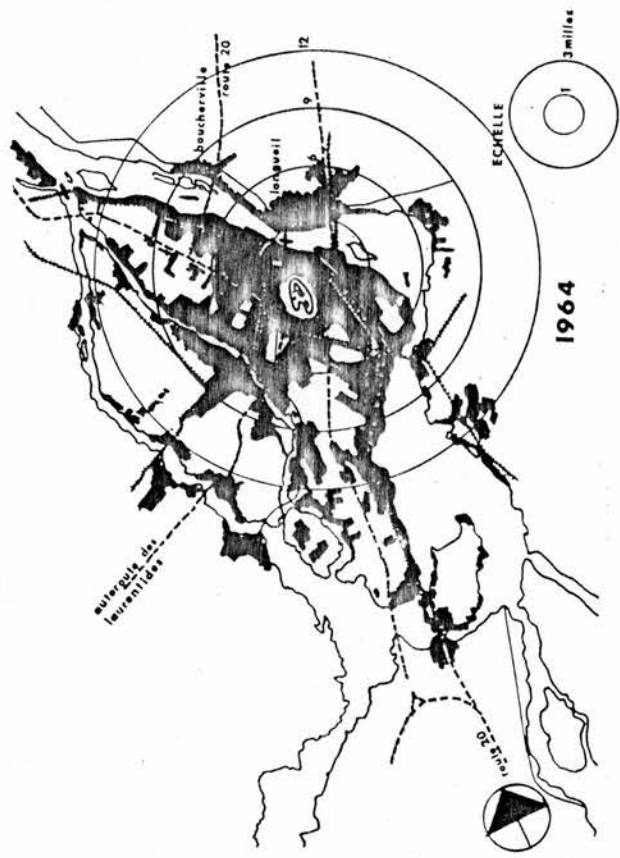
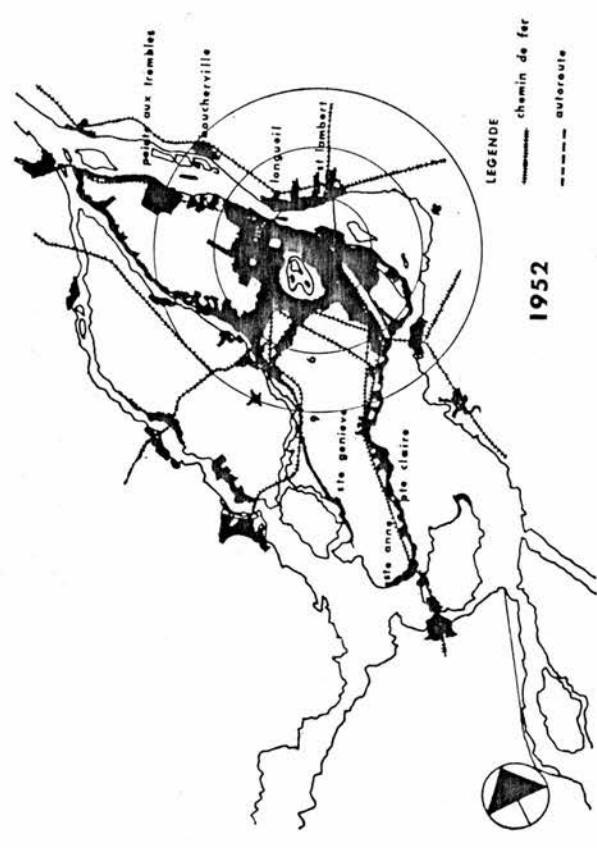


Fig. 23 and 24 Urban growth.



the result of first-rate planning. Let us examine for the time being the case of the Town of Mount Royal, the "Cité-jardin", and the new Nuns' Island project, which were all the result of advance planning.

The origin of the Town of Mount Royal may be traced to a large real estate deal which took place in 1911. In that year, two high-ranking officials of the Canadian Northern Railway, Sir William MacKenzie and Sir Donald Mann, who wanted to establish a station and terminal facilities in Montreal for their railway, made a substantial purchase of land in downtown Montreal. It included the land on which Place Ville Marie, Central Station and Place Bonaventure stand today, as well as 5,700 acres of rural land to the north west of Mount Royal. They intended to dig a tunnel under the hill, to bring the railway directly into the heart of the city and to build a pilot city on the other side of the hill. This project entailed, of course, very large profits based on the increased value of land, which was now accessible, and on a steady flow of railway customers. The 3-mile long tunnel was completed in October 1918 together with a blue-print for the new suburb.²⁹

The layout, which drew its inspiration from various sources, shows the influence of Ebenezer Howard, the father of the garden city concept. The star-shaped intersection of the large boulevards in the heart of the town is

reminiscent of the Paris avenues designed during the "second empire". However, the diminutive station standing right in the middle of the intersection ruins this ambitious perspective and deprives the plan of its original intent. The remainder of the residential area, with its curved and circular lanes, is the direct offspring of the Romantic designs which were first created for cemeteries and public parks and finally became a model for all architects engaged in the planning of residential suburbs. Other municipalities like Hampstead and St-Michel were to follow the lead, though not quite so successfully nor on such a large scale.

Today, Town of Mount Royal is looked upon as a mere enclave of the privileged few; its landscape has lost some of its original spark, and the pioneer role it once played as a model for residential planning is now mostly forgotten. The Cité-jardin has also been forgotten, although the principles on which its planning rests go far beyond those involved in the planning of Town of Mount Royal. Its plans were drawn in the early forties by Auguste Gosselin and Fr. Jean d'Auteuil Richard, s.j., both laymen in that particular field. Their purpose, based on moral, social and economic grounds, was to provide working class people with a healthier environment than the kind of surroundings they usually had to live in. This development was plagued all along with all sorts of frustrations.

Only one-fourth of the original plan was ever completed. However, it came very close to matching the qualities that have contributed to the fame of Radburn (New Jersey), by Clarence S. Stein and Henry Wright, which is a masterpiece of community planning. Like Radburn, Cité-jardin aimed at limiting motor traffic to a minimum, and at enforcing a practical segregation between the flow of pedestrians and the traffic of vehicles. It was designed to spare as much space as possible for playgrounds and parks, which would be open to the public. All streets were dead-end streets and there were no sidewalks. Pedestrians could opt for a parallel network of roads traced after a simple and flexible pattern. In the opinion of Paul Ritter, author of the well-known book Planning for Man and Motor, Cité-jardin "works as well, or better, than any other traffic-segregated scheme I have seen in any country."³⁰ This is indeed flattering, but considering what is presently achieved in our suburbs, like Ville d'Anjou, St-Leonard, Ville de Laval or on the South Shore, it is clear that the lesson of Cité-jardin has been totally ignored, almost as if it had never even been acknowledged.

The only residential planning that might rival Cité-jardin is the development of Nuns' Island, a 1000-acre reserve on the St. Lawrence River to which access was provided when Champlain Bridge was built in 1962. Planned to accommodate

a potential 50,000 residents, it is based on the well-known concept of articulated neighbouring units. There are three main residential communities, clustered around a small town centre. The master plan, designed by Johnson, Johnson & Roy of Michigan, is a good plan. It takes into account the visual potential of the site and provides for an integrated traffic network which applies the principle of pedestrian-vehicle segregation. However, it is not in any way specific to our Canadian environment, for it has already been successfully applied to the new post-war cities of England, such as Stevenage... now 30 years old. Moreover it will take a few more decades before it is permeated with an authentic life of its own.³¹

The first attempt at any global planning for Montreal was a tentative master plan drafted in 1944. It was the outcome of long and considerable efforts to prepare the ground and educate the public, efforts which go as far back as 1909, when a City Improvement League was founded to promote the idea of a master plan that would control the growth of Greater Montreal. In 1921, an amendment to the city's charter set up a Planning Commission with a mandate to make suggestions and recommendations for the improvement of the city. Committees and commissions followed one another, but it was not until May 1941 that the Montreal City Planning Department was

established on a permanent basis, like the Department of Health, Public Works or Finances. Its purpose was two-fold: it was to prepare a master plan that would provide for the orderly development of the city as a whole, while controlling settlement patterns and other related activities.³²

Strangely enough, the 1944 blue print suffers from a lack of any regional perspective. The same applies to the solution it proposed for the settlement of the land and for traffic patterns. The proposed traffic network, for one, seemed aimed at relieving the existing thoroughfares rather than at providing a structural framework. It resulted in confusion as to the specific functions and character of the various arteries. In some instances, heavy traffic was diverted to areas and municipalities of a highly residential character. Although conceived in the forties, this plan does not seem to have foreseen the importance of motor vehicle transport. The industrial zoning it proposed was merely an extension of the existing industrial areas, which were all connected to waterways or railways. On the other hand, the mass-transport network was well integrated. The route suggested for an initial subway as well as for its potential extension was very close to our present route, adopted two decades later and to the additional route contemplated for the future.

There are other suggestion worth mentioning in

that preliminary draft. One was the idea of reclaiming the island's shores to convert them into parkways. Had it been achieved, even on a very limited scale, this would have been a positive and particularly welcome contribution today, since this project seems less and less probable as the years go by. The same remark applies to the suggestion made towards building similar parkways along administrative boundaries of the city. The latter suggestion was perhaps not very realistic, and the pressures of development would have probably made the completion of such a network impossible. Nevertheless, the slightest green space that such a policy might have preserved would have been a welcome contribution in an area which needs them so badly today.

To conclude the present analysis, we must concede that in spite of its good points, the master plan remained a prisoner of the traditional image of Montreal, that on an industrial town, structured in the days when its survival depended on steam and water. Our present metropolis has now outlived that state. However, the planners do have a valid excuse: in the early forties, the growth rate was very low in Montreal, following several decades of economic stagnation due to two world wars and to the great recession. This may well have influenced their vision of the future.³³ (Pl. 72)

A more realistic and flexible approach was later

to be provided by the municipal town-planners and technicians who, in August 1967, submitted a new draft called "Horizon 2000". It was based on the premise that the urban reality of Montreal is a demographic, social, cultural and spatial reality that goes far beyond the artificial boundaries which put its municipalities into a political and legal straight jacket. The new draft tries to take into account the fact that by the time we reach the year 2000, Greater Montreal will be housing about 7 million people, with an approximate per capital income of \$3,300 and some 3,200,000 cars. Its purpose is to provide the citizens of the future with an organized framework that will enable them to live, work, move around and enjoy leisure under the best available conditions. Such conditions can only be achieved by respecting the physical characteristics of the site, its resources and opportunities, its existing activities, its historical and visual values and also its economic ties with the rest of the world.

In order to achieve this purpose, the draft suggested a regional structure of development, oriented along two axial lines. The first one would be an axis of economic growth determined by the river; it would cover all the economic activities likely to benefit from the presence of the river such as port operations, industries depending on water transport or needing large quantities of water. This axis would eventually

extend from Valleyfield all the way to Sorel-Tracy. Perpendicular to this "heavy" axis, there would be a "light" axis of demographic growth with light industries, and tertiary industries. It would extend on both sides towards such important recreation areas as the Laurentides and the Eastern Townships. At the intersection of the two axes, the City of Montreal proper, surrounded by a dozen municipalities would become the heart and motor of the whole area.

As a matter of fact this draft respects all the existing development trends. One new idea it incorporates consists of adding a large number of urban cells to the existing regional skeleton. These cells would consist of a large concentration of population polarized around centres providing the social animation and services needed for the economic, social and cultural demands of life. Such functional units would be partly self-sufficient and would gravitate around their central pole of exchange; they would act as catalysts for populations which are now scattered without any order or coherence throughout non-descript suburbs.

Such a structure, supported by an appropriate policy, would also help to reclaim land suitable for farming or recreation. Beyond these urban units, satellite towns such as Valleyfield, St-Jean, St-Hyacinthe, Sorel, Joliette, St-Jérôme and Lachute would play a similar role for the

peripheral populations. It has already been forecast that within the next 25 years each of these satellite townships will be catering to the needs of 150,000 to 300,000 people.

Communications with and within that large metropolis, spread as a galaxy, would be provided through both public and private transport networks; each system would preserve its own speed and specific characteristics but all of them would complement each other for an overall more efficient use. The emphasis, however, would be laid on public transport. Thus, the main regional center would be gradually equipped with a complex subway network, which would cover 100 miles in the year 2000. As for the urban cells, they would be linked to each other as well as to the central core by an appropriate network of highways supplemented by a regional service of express buses (2 main lines: Ste-Adèle - St-Hyacinthe; Rigaud - Joliette) and commuter trains.³⁴

So, far from trying to slow down the growth of the metropolis - which was already foreseeable in the long run - the pilot plan rather attempts to provide for a framework ensuring a regional balance between the heart of the city and its satellites. It is also a very flexible plan. It implicitly acknowledges that while people have to earn a living, they have the right to live as they please and to choose the place where they wish to live and the means of transport they want

to use. The draft, therefore, constitutes a mere guideline; it simply tries to make the inventory of the interactions of the varied urban activities and to regulate them so that they complement each other instead of being competitive. And while it is respectful of existing trends, it emphasizes the physical features which are specific to our metropolis.

While the planners of the draft may be commended for their vision, it cannot be implemented unless two basic conditions are met (the same may be said of other similar plans, including Stockholm's). First of all, the numerous administrative boundaries which fragment this large area into hundreds of autonomous administrations should no longer be allowed to jeopardize truly regional planning. A first step was taken in that direction in 1970, when the Urban Community of Montreal was established and granted jurisdiction over the whole of the Montreal island. It is responsible, among other things, for land assessment, integration of public utilities and for the drafting of a pilot renovation plan. Yet, it is once more to be feared that its field of jurisdiction is not going to encompass the whole economic and social reality of the metropolitan area. Secondly, something should be done to curb the nefarious practices of the real estate speculators who now control most of the Greater Montreal area, for they are primarily responsible for the anarchy and the ugliness prevailing in its

developments, with all the social costs this implies. All in all, if, as originally intended, Horizon 2000 has contributed to arouse among the people and in the mind of the leaders a form of regional awareness, as well as the desire to preside over the future development of the metropolis, it will not have strived in vain.

5. Liberation: a Challenge

As may be gathered from the foregoing, today's Montreal is indeed very different from what it was in the nineteenth century. The image of the Victorian city as a relatively coherent entity made up of municipalities, industrial and residential districts, each with its own individuality - like St-Henri or the Square Mile - is rapidly fading. So is the concept of the "two cities" or "two solitudes", one French, the other English, separated by their standard of living, their language, their social milieu and their environment. Today, we see the fragmented metropolis pulling towards the undefined fringe of its own periphery which is gradually but steadily eroding the rural countryside. It is hard to detect any kind of physical or social framework on the periphery; even the linguistic dividing line no longer follows the pattern of the previous century. The only remaining boundaries are those separating the various social classes. In fact, these built-up expanses are no longer a city, in the real sense of the

word, but an urbanized area that would be devoid of any spirit or identity, if it were not for a few square miles at the centre of the city and in its immediate neighbourhood which have retained some of their traditional aspects.

? The blame lies with the economic and technical revolution, itself an offspring of the Industrial revolution, which submerged the traditional city in this urbanized ocean. It has changed the relationship between man and his resources and environment; it has fostered a gradual secularization of society and has upset the patterns of settlement and the type of social organization identified with the concept of a traditional city. The technopolis is in the process of replacing the industrial city of the nineteenth century, just as the latter once replaced the merchant town of the eighteenth century. Between these different types of cities lies more than a simple evolution. There were two eras and two revolutions. To discuss the present metropolis in terms of an industrial city is to deeply misunderstand its true essence, even though in the case of Montreal - as well as in the case of any other metropolis - the process of post-industrial conversion has not yet been completed. It is happening right now. We do not as yet know what the end result of these changes will be, when the town has crystallized in its new state of evolution. We may, at best, venture a few thoughts on the impetus which has

caused the explosion of the traditional city.

The overall effect of this force is one of liberation. Indeed, liberation is the most significant aspect of this economic and technical revolution: man has been liberated from a number of limitations and physical and spiritual constraints. Railways, roads, efficient and flexible private or public transport as well as electronic communications have allowed industries to ignore the constraints of their actual location within a certain physical environment. By the same token most citizens are no longer bound to reside close to their place of work. They are now able to chose a residence in the area of their choice, something which their grandparents could have never dreamed of. Today, within a radius of thirty miles - even this distance is temporary - the constraints of distance no longer exist. Another kind of liberation has taken place at the socio-cultural level: the mastery man has acquired over the physical world is now paralleled by his mastery over his own human destiny and by his repudiation of the myths of the past. As Harvey Cox brilliantly explained in The Secular City, the technopolis has generated a new kind of man, the "secularized" man. Liberated from religious taboos and from obsolete cultural concepts, his interests are now focused on the tangible world and he is now ready to ensure that all the promises the world holds for him are fulfilled.³⁵ In Quebec,

perhaps more than elsewhere, the deep transformation thus undergone by society was so acutely felt that it was quite appropriately called the quiet revolution. This awareness of new values by the people of Quebec is particularly striking since Quebec's society, as we have tried to demonstrate in Chapter III, had until quite recently maintained an almost medieval system of values. As André Saumier points out, this system of values was "d'autant mieux structuré et plus grandiose qu'il était plus coupé du monde réel des révolutions urbaines et industrielles"³⁶.

However, this liberating force carries seeds of danger within itself. The "City efficient", to use a coined phrase, with its emphasis on efficiency, production, concentration and centralization of the organs governing its economic life, is entirely focused on the profitability of invested capital, often the expense of basic human values. The danger is all the more serious now that industrial production is dependent on highly productive machinery. We are now learning at our own expense that both production and the city which supports it have but little respect for the biological, physiological and psychological needs of human beings. Pollution in all its forms is a consequence of the production system and threatens the very life of the individual, not to mention the heavy menace it constitutes for the quality of life in an urban environment. Few large cities benefit from as many natural

amenities as Montreal; the large fresh water basins around the city are a case in point. Yet, because of pollution, those lakes and rivers are already almost unfit for consumption or for educational or recreational purposes.

In many respects this so-called liberation is a delusion: urban man is in many ways more of a slave than he ever was before. Investment profits, real estate speculation or good old "laissez-faire", all of them slaveries in their own right, are not new. What is new and threatening, though, is the scale on which they operate. They feed on the freedom obtained through liberation, and to achieve their goals, they rely on the powerful weapons of modern technology, among which the means of communication and the information media figure prominently. As the authors of the 5th Technical Bulletin of the Montreal City Planning Department points out, the development of the metropolis is neither oriented nor controlled, but is rather scattered according to the whim and interests of speculators, developers and contractors. Between 1961 and 1964, there were more than 500 building sites or development starts for the metropolitan area alone, which were totally unrelated to one another, without any functional or formal relationship with the existing urban fabric.³⁷ Thus, the urban area which claims to be a functional entity becomes less functional every day. This is achieved at the expense of the city itself, at

the expense of the countryside which is too readily sacrificed to the development frenzy, and lastly at the expense of the citizens themselves who eventually have to bear the economic and social costs as well as suffer the loss in the quality of life. Moreover, these costs rise with each passing day. Indeed, the combination of vested interests and unworkable structures will eventually constitute a major obstacle in the way of rational development of the future metropolis.

The same comment applies to the social and cultural changes generated by the quiet revolution. While very promising in terms of benefits, they leave some rather alarming gaps unfilled. Thus, except for the attachment that people have for their neighbourhood as a living environment, nothing very consistent seems to have thus far replaced the parish as a base for social organization. Also, the repudiation of some of the values of the past has not ipso facto generated a new set of values. This vacuum is therefore often poorly filled by false values like the importance attached to one's standard of living or social status or like the veneration attached to certain superficial cultural fashions, mostly imported from the United States. There is a danger of falling into sterile social and cultural conformism, without any room for creativity or originality; unfortunately, life in our suburbs all too often reflects this fact.

Modern architecture in Montreal, with a few exceptions, appeared around 1930; it too reflects deep changes. Like the technopolis which strived to offer functional solutions to the needs of the metropolis which had by now been liberated from its old physical and socio-cultural constraints, modern architecture makes a dramatic break with the past in an attempt to offer its own answers to the new needs. Not only are the latter different from those of the previous era: they are conditioned by a new scale imposed by the large concentrations of people in the urban centres.

The technological revolution produced new materials and new construction methods as well as new devices such as the elevator and mechanical ventilation, thereby liberating architecture from its former limitations and converting it into a rational form of art based on abstract principles and scientific rules applicable under any condition and anywhere. Its current appellations illustrate this change of direction: international architecture, functional architecture, abstract architecture, and so on.

The aims of modern architecture is to provide the functional spaces required by specific architectural programmes and to preserve only the architectural form required by the functions, instead of borrowing, like Victorian architecture, from a legacy of established forms inherited from

previous styles. It therefore adamantly rejects anything Victorian. On the other hand, we must admit that modern architecture was partly born from Victorian architecture, as the latter was characterized by the conflict between the product of a machine and that of an imagination in quest of sensitive stimulations, between the very precise art of the engineer and the loose inspiration of the artist. The machine was to win.

With the twentieth century, we have entered an era of logic and abstraction; it was not a mere passage from one century to another. Queen Victoria's death meant more than the end of a long reign: a whole era died with her. The new era had rejected the Romantic ideals and proposed another set of values which sometimes opposed the former. Thus in the field of planning and architecture, the Romantic city has been replaced by the rational city; symbolic and Picturesque architecture by a functional and abstract architecture. Therein lies all the difference between the Sun Life Building and CIL House, between Viger Station and Dorval Airport. The supremacy of technology has replaced the predominance of culture.

Yet, if the Corinthian columns, the Italian arches and the Gothic pinnacles seem to have disappeared forever from the plans and work of the architects, the latter as well as the town planner have yet to grasp fully the implications

of this totally new world. Even though town-planning and architecture in Montreal have made considerable progress and in spite of some modern feats such as Place Ville-Marie and Place Bonaventure which have given our city a lead in urban design, the Victorian phenomenon remains a latent fact. Thus, just as in Victorian times, many huge modern buildings have been simply compressed within a network of streets designed to answer the needs of the small eighteenth century town. Thus, fifty years of progress separate the Aldred Building from the Banque Canadienne Nationale on Place d'Armes. Architecturally speaking, the latter building does indeed reflect the progress achieved, but when it comes to its location and integration within the urban fabric, it faithfully repeats the mistakes of the former building. The same remark applies to the tragic parade of modern residential towers which have been grafted onto the old residential avenues. Streets like St-Mathieu or Lincoln are on the verge of duplicating the Wall Streets of the previous century.

However, the permanence of the Victorian influence is most obvious and most puzzling in our new suburbs, even when they have been subjected to a certain degree of planning. Vague Romantic concepts inherited from the previous century affect the road network in the most superficial manner: there, planning sometimes consists of a mere curve in the road. All

at once, streets have lost their density of habitation, the picturesqueness of their decor and their quality as a social environment; in brief, they have lost all the qualities which were so characteristic of the true Victorian streets, without bringing any satisfactory solution to the problems of motorized traffic or to the needs of pedestrian safety. Here again, a degenerate form of Victorian culture, clinging to its small pretensions cottages, displays all the pretensions of the new smalltime parvenus, without being able to express any of their ideals. These aspects will be dealt with in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE NEW CORE OF THE CITY

Montreal is about to become the
first 20th century city in North
America.
Peter Blake.¹

1. Fifty Years of Gestation

Twentieth century architecture in Montreal presents many aspects which merit our attention. We could attempt to retrace the evolution, on the whole rather disappointing, of apartment-building architecture, starting with a survey of the amazing concrete structures of the twenties like the building looking onto Christin and Savignac Streets (near Sanguinet) or the rather amazing multi-functional building at no 2, Sherbrooke West, (at the corner of St. Lawrence), with its Art Nouveau flavour, all the way to a discussion of the icy qualities of a complex like Westmount Square or the delirious plasticity of Habitat '67. We could also discuss some of the structures which were famous at the time of their inauguration but whose style was unable to withstand the passage of time, such as the main building of the University of Montreal, designed in 1925 by Ernest Cormier which, according to Alan Gowans, is but a conventional design adorned with the some modern clichés.² Again, it might be enjoyable to visit the many churches and sanctuaries which, after World War II, have

illustrated, with occasional hints at the Baroque, the care-free mood of a religious regime already on its wane. The name of Roger d'Astous, a Montreal architect, is associated with several of these constructions; they offer a rather strange and naïve mixture of magazine pictures combined with a genius for innovations. All these efforts, however, would only lead to the selection of a list of buildings, a sort of catalogue from which the city and its reality would disappear. We feel much more inclined, as we cast a final glance at Montreal and its architecture, to emphasize those achievements directly and physically related to the city, its life and development, such as the new downtown area and the subway. This new centre which started with the Place Ville-Marie project, is of particular interest for it is the town-planners' dream come true. It is now well on the way to fulfill their long-cherished vision of a metropolis with a multi-purpose, multi-level core. While its scattered towers have certainly contributed to alter the traditional silhouette of the Victorian city, its most distinctive feature, by far, is its intricate infra-structure: an underground network of subway and highways, four miles of shopping galleries, malls and car-parks, as well as train and motor vehicle services. In the opinion of many experts, thanks to its new core, Montreal is at the forefront of urban planning.³ Montrealers are generally unaware of this reality and even less

conscious of the many factors which made the existence of such a centre possible. The post-war economic boom certainly played an important role but it cannot account for the quality which characterizes this development. Not only were the opportunities available but there were also talented and determined men ready to take advantage of them.

The starting point of this achievement was, according to Vincent Ponte⁴, the existence right in the middle of the downtown area of three adjacent blocks totalling about 22 acres of land belonging to one and the same owner.⁵ As already mentioned in the previous chapter, the purchase of this valuable land was completed in 1911, when two senior officials of the Canadian Northern Railway decided to boost its operations by building a large terminal in Montreal. A three-mile long tunnel under the mountain provided access to the site, ending south of the Beaver Hall Ridge in an open trench that would disfigure Downtown Montreal for almost half a century, despite an attempt made as early as 1913 to purchase the right to develop above ground.

A few years later, in 1923, an important event took place which had a determining effect on the downtown development: the Canadian National Railway was incorporated into a Crown Corporation, bringing under it various companies: the Grand Trunk, the Pacific Grand Grunk, the Northern Canadian,

in fact almost every railway in the country with the exception of the Canadian Pacific.

The merger compelled the officials of the Canadian National to rationalize the operations of the various lines. In Montreal, this resulted in the phasing out of previous passenger stations, including Moreau and Bonaventure, and combining them into one single central station while the various offices formerly situated in about 15 buildings scattered around the city were now all brought together under one roof.

Such was the picture when, in 1929, a new plan was put forward for the development of the site. Inspired by the Rockefeller Centre in New York and drafted by Hugh G. Jones, it covered, in addition to the new Central Station, several office buildings and appropriate space for retail business. The proposed renovation with its broad central perspective was classical in design and decidedly conservative in its architectural components. The project, however, was cut short, due to the great depression and the Second World War, except for the Central Station which was constructed in 1938 as part of an unemployment assistance program of the federal government.⁶

The building of the station proved to be an important step for two reasons: first of all, it provided a valuable crossroad of communications for an area which already contained Windsor Station and the Bell Telephone and

Communications Buildings. Furthermore, it turned out to be the first important architectural building in Montreal without any façade, a sort of huge, multi-purpose envelope.⁷ This kind of "celebration" architecture, as Architect Ray Affleck called it, would later influence other structures, such as Place Bonaventure.

After the war, Jacques Greber, the famous French town planner - to whom, incidentally, we owe a master-plan for the national capital - was called to discuss the renovation of the CN properties on the site. One of his suggestions deserves special mention: the idea was to reserve enough free space on the northern side of the site to provide for a public plaza. Since Montreal was the only city with a downtown area wedged between a mountain and a river, Greber assumed that a plaza of this kind would give the final touch to the long vista joining the hill and the beautiful McGill campus on the one hand and the downtown area on the other. The CN officials discussed the suggestion with the municipal representatives and demanded in exchange that the principal streets be enlarged to absorb the increase in traffic that would result from the construction of such a large complex on this location.⁸

In the meantime, new renovation plans had been prepared under the direction of Architect G. F. Drummond. Some of the new plans materialized on that part of the site already

partly occupied by Central Station. They account for the existence of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Building, the Terminal Building, the Queen Elizabeth Hotel and the CN Station. None of them deserves special mention from architectural point of view. There was no follow-up on the suggestions concerning the area north of the latter sector so that when William Zeckendorf was later contacted, and asked in 1955 to develop the site, he found it in exactly the same condition as it was in 1918: a deep open trench with rails forcing their way under Mount Royal.⁹

Zeckendorf, whose energetic drive in this matter was to give a start to the renovation of Downtown Montreal, very wisely commissioned I.M. Pei & Co. to submit a master-plan for the development of all the land owned by the CN on the site. The plan was accepted by CN in 1954 thus giving it, by means of a 99-year lease, the necessary rights and privileges to develop the northern side of the site.

This plan deserves our attention for it is based on a set of principles aimed at making the renovation of the heart of the metropolis a lasting achievement. First, it assumes that a development of this magnitude will generate a tremendous flow of activities. Today, for example, an estimated 15,000 people work in the Ville-Marie complex alone, and some 60,000 to 100,000 people pass through it daily, not to

mention hundreds of trucks stopping for deliveries. In an era when the emphasis is on cooperation and interdependence in the field of labour and on concentration and centralization in the field of enterprise, a complex of this kind is also a powerful pole of attraction. No wonder that commercial buildings such as CIL Tower, the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce and the Stock Exchange chose to be located in the immediate vicinity of Place Ville-Marie. In order to absorb the prevailing pressures, Pei proposed a peripheral highway aimed at diverting the transit traffic. The original plan for this boulevard was not realized as expected but the network of urban highways now under construction, and especially the subway, nevertheless help to relieve the congestion inherent to a downtown area which is wedged between the river and Mount Royal.

The second renovation principle is characteristic of the plan: it calls for a complete segregation between the various types of traffic throughout the site (and eventually on the adjacent sites as well). This segregation applies not only to horizontal traffic, such as traditional streets and sidewalks but also to the vertical traffic: indeed it provides specific levels for specific types of traffic. There are, for instance, in both Place Ville-Marie and Place Bonaventure, separate levels for trains, motor vehicle traffic and parking lots as well as for pedestrians.

A third aspect of this plan which also needs to be emphasized is its departure from the traditional development concept that considers land as a mere site on which to erect a building to house the headquarters of a dominant function. This concept has generated cities where the core is fragmented into a series of specialized units. The new downtown area of Montreal is unique because of the multiplicity and the variety of its closely inter-related functions. Place Ville-Marie and Place Bonaventure both show a remarkable concentration of many functions under the same roof: service functions of the upper tertiary sector, retail businesses, hotels, industrial concerns, culture, recreation and others.¹⁰ The example set here was soon followed by Place Victoria, Place du Canada, and the Alexis Nihon Plaza.

Finally, this plan is a deliberate contribution to the idea of redistributing the city along visual lines. Most decisive in this respect was the suggestion made by Greber and carried out by the planners, which was to design a vast urban perspective linking Mount Royal to Place Ville-Marie. While this suggestion, inspired by the traditions of the Beaux-Arts can hardly be considered as an innovation in the field of urban renovation, one cannot but agree with Henri Cobb that the Plaza of Place Ville-Marie provides a truly dramatic setting for a visual confrontation between Mount Royal and the City.¹¹

2. The Downtown Giants

Let us now take a look at the Place Ville-Marie complex itself. It owes its existence to the intuition of promoter Zeckendorf who realized that there was a market in Montreal for office buildings offering a minimum of 20,000 square feet of floor space on every floor. Zeckendorf felt - and subsequent events proved him right - that a standard renting space of this size would best answer the needs of the large modern corporations which had always showed a marked preference for prestige buildings.¹²

The cruciform tower of Ville-Marie complex offers 38,000 square feet per floor. In fact, the tower's shape was dictated by these exceptional dimensions. Indeed, in the case of buildings of this type, where the site itself is not a limiting factor, it is usually the need for standardized floor space free of any obstacle and adequately lit with natural light which prevails. Considering the overall area of the typical floor, it was obvious from the start that the traditional square or rectangular shape would not be able to provide adequate natural lighting. The obstacle was overcome by splitting the floor area into four rectangles of equal dimensions articulated around a central service core.¹³

While internally functional, this cruciform tower may appear somewhat heavy on the outside, when viewed from a

certain angle or in the absence of the sunshine which usually enhances its volumes. The feeling of heaviness it conveys is further accentuated by its curtain-wall, visually neuter and too uniform.

While the cruciform shape was accepted without question from the very start, the design of the complex itself was to undergo considerable changes in the course of its construction. All in all, these changes were for the better, especially the addition at the base of the tower of four powerful quadrants, balanced out of perpendicular. These huge masses, entirely blind on the outside, but lit through the roof by sky-lights, were added to comply with the requirements of the first and most important tenant, The Royal Bank of Canada. These masses provide a better link between the tower and the plaza than was originally planned for. Similarly, the design of the IBM and Esso Buildings, built on two sides of the plaza, was altered in order to integrate these buildings into the overall design of the plaza.

On the other hand, some of the original drafts did not materialize, much to the detriment of the whole complex. Thus, for instance, the architects had proposed that a ramp provide direct access from the plaza to Ste-Catherine Street, as it was the main commercial artery of the metropolis. This suggestion was in keeping with the broader plans aimed at

redeveloping McGill College Avenue, and converting it into a long perspective linking Place Ville-Marie to the mountain. So far, the unwillingness of neighbouring owners has jeopardized the prospect of establishing such a link which would have allowed pedestrians to commute between the plaza and Ste-Catherine Street. As matters now stand, McGill College Avenue comes to a pitiful end at the entrance of Place Ville-Marie's parking lot.

The plaza itself is not without flaws. Even though it is itself a viable space, dramatized by the cruciform tower and handsomely framed by the IBM and Esso Buildings - though rather poorly by the monotonous façade of the Queen Elizabeth Hotel - it does not seem very inviting and is not usually very crowded. One cannot help but wonder why.

First of all, it is physically and visually far too insular. Dorchester Boulevard, on which it borders on one side, is essentially a thoroughfare and does not attract pedestrians. On the opposite side, the base of the plaza stands above Ste-Catherine Street and viewed from the latter's level, it does not look like a public square. Moreover, it is subjected to the effects of a micro-climate and plagued at all times by violet and often icy winds. The covering on the walls of the tower and of the surrounding buildings unfortunately does nothing to create a feeling of warmth.

The plaza's greatest drawback as a pole of attraction lies in the fact that, compared to the shopping galleries it covers, it is most uninteresting. Its dual function as a public square and as the roof of a shopping gallery takes second place to the success enjoyed by the gallery which is more easily and more directly accessible to pedestrians.

Running above two levels respectively assigned to parking (1500 cars) and to services, and extending to the end above the level of the CN railway tracks, the galleries are the end-product of good design, pleasant proportions and first-class materials. From a strictly commercial point of view, they constitute an adequate answer to the competition generated by the large suburban shopping centres by offering, right in the centre of town, almost the same selection of goods, the same separation between pedestrians and motor vehicles, and the same convenience for the customers. However, it is still patterned after a conservative concept, duplicating underground both the street between two rows of shops and the orthogonal grid prevailing almost everywhere above the ground.

Strictly speaking, had Place Ville-Marie been limited to its cruciform tower and its plaza, it would not have been a very striking achievement, in spite of some of the details of construction and engineering which would be worth nothing. The main features which account for its originality

are the variety and the complementary nature of its functions, the protected passages with different alleys of traffic which are segregated from each other according to the respective nature of their functions. (Pl. 73 & 74)

Between the time when the Place Ville-Marie project was launched and the day it was inaugurated, two important commercial towers were completed in the vicinity of Place Ville-Marie: the Canadian Industries Limited Building (CIL House) and the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce Building. It was not so much because Dorchester Boulevard was widened in the early fifties that these buildings were located on its edges, but rather because Place Ville-Marie was growing into a pole of attraction. In the mind of the planners, the widening of the boulevard was intended to channel the downtown development towards the east but Place Ville-Marie brought this trend to a standstill.

Considered from a technical point of view, the CIL Building is close to perfection; inundated with daylight, it has a standard floor surface totalling about 20,000 square feet which is an ideal size for renting purposes. Its volume, housing some 34 floors, does not lack elegance; its architectural features are a tribute to all the precepts of the modern school of architecture. It was designed by Architects Greenspoon, Freedlander and Dunne, but consulting Architects



73. The giants of the city centre.

74. Central Station and Place Ville-Marie buildings.



75. Bonaventure metro station.

76. Expo '67: a hierarchy of transport systems.



Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, had undoubtedly a determining influence, for the latter firm is among the most committed to modern trends on the American continent and is well known for its ability to make the best possible use of all the modern techniques at its disposal.¹⁴

As for the way it blends with the urban fabric, the CIL Building remains unfortunately an isolated block; it conveys the impression of having been forced into the grid of the existing streets, a feeling that the building's mini-plaza does not help to relieve. Incidentally, the existence of such plazas is only due to a municipal regulation which allows the floor space to be increased for that part of a building located above the average ground level, in direct proportion to the space left at the ground level for public use in the form of a plaza or other structure.¹⁵

In the absence of any detailed plan for the remodelling of the downtown district, a regulation like Amendment 2887 (adopted on September 9, 1963) was a lesser evil. Its essential purpose was to avoid any repetition of the kind of dark, corridor-like streets like New York's Wall Street and St. James Street in Montreal. This enactment, however, was more the result of a defensive reaction than the outcome of a creative impulse: the public squares derived from regulations of that kind are often insignificant and poorly integrated.

They look more like perrons or parvis than like real plazas.

This is particularly true in the case of the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce Building, located at the northwest corner of Windsor and Dorchester. Its recessed position with respect to both avenues is ridiculous; only the presence of the Dominion Square Building compensates for this drawback; the latter building is a 620 feet high-rise erected on the site of the old Windsor Hotel, the oldest part of which was pulled down to make room for its construction. It has a comparatively narrow base - 140 feet by 100 feet - which contributes to enhance its tall and slender aspect. Critic Peter Collins has compared its proportions to those of the campanile of Piazza San Marco in Venice.¹⁶ Designed by Architect Peter Dickinson, it certainly does not lack elegance but of all the large modern office buildings in the city, it is perhaps the least fit for business. Its renting floor surface lags far behind the optimum 20,000 square feet achieved in the CIL Building. It ranges from 12,500 square feet for the lower floors to some 13,800 feet for the upper floors.¹⁷

The Stock Exchange Tower on Victoria Square is another very elegant building. A number of architects contend that it may be listed among the most beautiful towers in the world. Bordering on Victoria Square, it creates a marvellous physical link between the old-time business centre of St. James

Street and the new commercial centre launched with Place Ville-Marie. The developers' purpose was to instil a new life into the old financial centre and to save it from obsolescence through an architectural programme aimed at boosting business by providing it with the best network of communications and services available.

This architectural programme resembles that of Place Ville-Marie, with its two underground floors for parking and services, above which a double deck of shopping galleries was built, with a direct connection to the Victoria subway Station. The volume of the lower extension, catering mainly to the Stock Exchange activities, acts as a hinge between the base and the 47-floor tower. It was designed to accommodate a potential extension towards the west and as a basis for a second tower similar to the first. The whole centre will eventually be connected, through an underground pedestrian network to all the other key-points of the city centre i.e. Place Bonaventure, Place Ville-Marie, the Central Station, etc.

At the time Montreal was first presented with a Stock Exchange complex, the project, drafted by Italian Architect Moretti and by world-famous engineer Nervi, was much more ambitious. It included three huge towers placed diagonally across a low base. This plan, however, presented some drawbacks: besides obstructing the view of Mount Royal, it

multiplied the costs of vertical services and communication centres at the expense of renting space. It was therefore altered for the better: only two towers would be built, one at a time. What we now admire is only the first phase of this development.

The foremost quality of the tower lies in its beauty. It rises forcefully from the ground, strongly supported by four tall columns erected at the corners and harmoniously rounded out with panels of pre-cast concrete. The tower itself is divided into three equal and similar blocks separated by three levels of articulation (5th, 19th and 32nd floors) providing interesting points for partly visible concrete diagonal braces. Its surface is lined with a smooth curtain-wall made of anodized aluminium with ancient bronze hues offering a pleasant contrast with the stark white colour of the four columns. This tower represents an exceptional marriage between function and form, between engineering and architecture. Here a spark has been fired from the union between techniques and esthetics. This is dynamic architecture, evolving along a logical, descriptive process. Moreover, all this was achieved while providing an optimal 18,000 square feet of renting space per floor, with natural light flooding everywhere.

Place Victoria once more bears witness to the European influence which never ceased to prevail in the

architectural tradition of Montreal, while the CIL Building is closer to the American influence, which is another pillar of our tradition. One is cool, classical and formal, and an outstanding technical success, demonstrating the mastery attained in the field by the nation which has developed the techniques of skyscraper construction. While the other is a remarkable achievement - it is the highest concrete building in the world - its appeal lies chiefly in its architectural lyricism.

Unfortunately, in this particular respect Place Victoria has had a questionable impact on the environment of the city's centre. It has indeed deprived the old Victoria Square of its very essence. The latter used to be a meaningful space drawing all the peripheral components into a single urban structure; now it no longer looks like a city square, but rather like a lobby leading to the high-rise. This was unavoidable, for the Stock Exchange tower is not built on the same scale as the Victorian city as that it cannot be integrated into its environment of squares and narrow streets. The tower now belongs to a different environment; it is the environment of the other high-rises, built on the scale of the Greater Montreal region. This is a somewhat frustrating aspect of the new Downtown Montreal: at the top level of the towers we perceive a new pattern which is neither on the same scale nor of the same period as the pattern we find at the bottom

level where all these buildings are crammed within an urban pattern which developed during the previous centuries.¹⁹

The Place Victoria complex - at least the part rising above the ground - remains essentially a powerfully conceived three-dimensional structure. By contrast, Place Bonaventure, one of the most original structures of this new downtown area appears as a huge cover or, to borrow a phrase from Eiler Rasmussen, as an architecture of cavities.²⁰ Here, the peripheral walls are not so much façades as climatic barriers delineating multi-level spaces where various functions and activities are intertwined.

For Ray Affleck, the chief architect of this project for the Montreal firm of Affleck, Dimakopoulos, Lebensold & Sise, it represents what it calls "celebration architecture" which is inward looking like that of a cathedral.²¹

Place Bonaventure was erected on the last plot of CN land south of Central Station and it was included in the renovation plan of IM Pei. Because of its lack of façades, it is closer in spirit to the latter station than to the Ville-Marie complex. Yet, the developers of the Concordia Company had first envisaged a more traditional building, such as the Stock Exchange. They had planned a low volume, housing a shop shopping centre and a large exhibition hall, which would have been used as a base for a high tower accommodating hotel

services. The architects however suggested a different approach: namely a single wide and massive block covering the six acres of the site, the roof of which would serve as an artificial ground for the development of hotel units.

Fortunately, the latter choice was to prevail for a rather particular reason: in order to realize this plan of development, architects, developers and contractors, for once, did not assume their usual role, which is to work in a linear sequence of action. Rather, they were united in a single plan of decision-making and action so that they all participated, simultaneously and with solidarity, in the creation of the complex. According to Ray Affleck, it was a successful approach; it demonstrated that creative ideas are not all confined within the traditional limits of the professional disciplines.²²

In essence, Place Bonaventure is therefore a multi-functional building (shopping centre - exhibition hall - auction rooms - international business centre - hotel and assorted services) linked, as in a living body, to all the various kinds of traffic (metro, pedestrians, subway crossings, motor vehicles, etc.). Here a very complex network for pedestrians traffic plays a particularly significant role. Far from attempting to impose a pattern of traffic on pedestrians, the architects designed their plans after a simulated model of the users' activities and this pattern became the prime generator of the

whole design. And architectural skills were put to good use in the design of a number of centres of activities spread throughout the overall plan.

One of the most difficult problems arising from such kinetic architecture was the problem of links and communications between the various functions of the complex. This problem was never resolved in any satisfactory way with the result that people unfamiliar with the place are sometimes utterly confused. While Place Bonaventure is definitely original in that all these functions are integrated in a global whole rather than scattering the various activities towards isolated individual units, it still has to make this new architectural concept "legible" and to give some coherence to an architecture which calls for global experience.

Leaving aside the functional aspects and turning to the spaces thus created, it is obvious that some of the latter have achieved a rare quality. The big Concordia exhibition hall, for instance, is impressive with its sombre and stark majesty. Some thirty feet high, its huge columns and their structural capitals are reminiscent of the grandeur of the hypostyle hall in an Egyptian temple. Equally remarkable is the location of the hotel with its 400 rooms distributed on several floors around an inner courtyard with all services housed in its centre. Efforts have been made to preserve the

privacy and independent aspect of those various units and it has been so successful that were it not for the surrounding downtown high-rises, one could imagine oneself anywhere except in the heart of the metropolis.

Seen from the outside, and in spite of attempts to articulate its façades, Place Bonaventure appears as a huge massive cube impregnated by the influence of Paul Rudolph. Its designers are the first to agree that the problem of the outside walls has not been resolved.²³ We are led to wonder whether walls were at all necessary for that type of architecture. A thin sheet of glass covering the centre of activities in the fashion of a geodisic dome, for example, would have given their true meaning to outer walls which after all serve no other purpose than that of a climatic barrier protecting the environment.

The structures we have just analyzed - Place Ville-Marie, CIL House, the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce Tower, the Stock Exchange complex and Place Bonaventure - are among the most interesting buildings constructed in downtown Montreal from the middle of the twentieth century onwards. There are other buildings, such as Place du Canada, Alexis Nihon Plaza or, going eastwards, Place des Arts where the main concert hall is of a classical, somewhat superficial design; or again the tower of the Banque Canadienne Nationale on Place

d'Armes, a rather ordinary building which is poorly integrated into its urban context. If any of these complexes deserved mention it would be Place du Canada, not so much for its actual merits but for those it could have had. Indeed the Château Champlain Tower seems to be the only high-rise to have escaped the standardization of design of modern buildings of this type. It is the first significant building to be designed by franco-phone Quebecers, in this case architects Roger d'Astous and the late Mr. Pothier. Its architectural features remind one of the shapes favoured by the great American Architect Frank Lloyd Wright which is not surprising since Roger d'Astous was one of Wright's students and attended his famous school in Wisconsin. However, even though the Master had many disciples and many imitators, he alone had the genius. This is painfully apparent in the Château Champlain Building.

3. Criticisms and Future Guidelines

We should now attempt to learn something from the partial reconstruction of downtown Montreal. It demonstrates, for instance, that there is room for bold ventures, especially in a field where the creation of equipment often promotes the creation of functions. Had it not been for the CN officials' idea of a global development of their land in the downtown area, or for Zeckendorf's determination and willingness to accept costly risks, or for the imagination displayed by the

townplanners and the architects of the Pei firm, one can assume that the renovation of the downtown area would have taken an entirely different and probably less satisfactory turn... if it ever took place at all. In spite of the complex conjunctions that usually surround such renovations, the pole of attraction created by this new downtown area demonstrates that it is really possible to interfere with the process of urban development. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the axial change that took place in the course of the redevelopment of Downtown Montreal. Until then, downtown development had always followed the east-west axis of St. James, Dorchester, or Ste-Catherine Streets. Now, through conscious and deliberate action, this axis would henceforth be oriented in a south-north direction from Place Bonaventure to Place du Mail.

Another fact demonstrated here is that capitalism is apparently not incompatible with good renovation. Traditionally, capitalists have always sought rapid and maximum profitability of urban spaces at the expense of continuity of design, of the community's welfare and even at the expense of their own interests. The renovation of Downtown Montreal helped the developers to realize that if their investments were to be profitable in the long run, planning and management should be such as to ensure the future social and economic viability of their projects.²⁴ It is quite certain, for instance, that the

new downtown pole of attraction would have slowly withered away were it not for the parallel solutions found for access and communication. It is equally certain that if it had not provided, at the retail level, for a regrouping of the various functions and a network for pedestrians ensuring climatic protection, comfort, safety, as well as an architectural framework with visual and acoustic qualities, it could not have survived the competition of the suburban shopping centres. The latter have demonstrated that those features of good planning and management have now become an economic factor of prime importance.²⁵ The Montreal network seems to be fairly well planned in this respect; it provides a larger surface and greater capacity than the Rockefeller Centre in New York and its quality surpasses that of the Penn Centre in Philadelphia.

However, there is no reason to be carried away by this achievement. Remarkable as it may be, it is in no way revolutionary. The concept, for instance, of a controlled-climate shopping gallery isolating pedestrians from the vehicle traffic is by no means recent. It is present in the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele in Milan, built in 1865-67, or, better still, in the famous Chester Rows in England which, as far back as the Middle Ages, contained covered shopping galleries on two levels; while in the XVth century, Leonardo da Vinci was already advocating vertical segregation of all kinds of urban

traffic. The same concept was later to be realized in London by the Adams brothers, in the Adelphi residential complex (1768-1774) where they devised an artificial foundation allowing separate traffic on different levels which compares with the foundations of our most modern centres.²⁶

In fact, the originality of the urban development of Downtown Montreal lay not so much in the concept of a multi-level city core - an idea that had haunted architects and townplanners for several generations - but in the fact that this concept had at last materialized in a tangible, major achievement. And this because of one particular reason that we should stress once again by quoting townplanner Vincent Ponte:

What has really made Montreal's urban miracle possible is the presence of large reservoirs of Downtown real estate, held in single ownership, often by railroads or other corporate entities. These break the shackles of lot-by-lot piecemeal development. They have enabled the entire core to be redeveloped as a unit.²⁷

This is quite true. In fact, for the whole project, the failure to link the Ville-Marie Plaza to Ste-Catherine Street was the only setback the architects and planners suffered. Here, as in the case of more conservative achievements, they were unable to overcome the obstacle of

vested interests or to solve the legal problems arising from the rights to build over public thoroughfares or private property. So they simply by-passed the obstacle by burying the essential human activities underground. Our proud master, the automobile, which is but an accessory to such activities, managed to remain above the natural ground and carried on as the ungrateful user of sun and air.

For those who reject this kind of criticism and insist, with Pelletier and Beauregard, that this achievement constitutes one "des plus remarquables phénomènes d'adaptation gréographique"²⁸, we would like to make the following comment: while it may be true that the natural topography of the site was aptly used to integrate the various services, it is ludicrous to think that our climate is so miserable that we should be compelled to live permanently underground. After all, we do enjoy six months of very mild temperatures, with many days of sunshine. While the hardships of winter certainly justify the principle of carrying on business underground, one should assume that the pleasant weather in the warm season should favour doing so in the open air. The new downtown facilities do not permit such a choice. Yet, structures erected in the previous century, such as the Galleria Vittoria Emmanuele in Milan ensure as good a protection against bad weather and other inconveniences as that provided by the shopping galleries of

Ville-Marie and Victoria Square while dispensing abundant daylight and fresh air.

Architect Affleck²⁹ and other experts contend that it is inaccurate, in the present case, to talk about underground networks since the ground level of these buildings is artificial. This is perfectly true but, to all intent and purpose these galleries and networks are concealed, whether truly underground or under an artificial ground level. In fact, there is no more visual link at the original ground level between Place Ville-Marie, the Central Station, and Place Bonaventure than there ever was between earlier structures like, for instance, the stores of Morgan's or Birks. Unless informed beforehand, no one walking on the street could even suspect what is going on below the street level. In fact, seen from the outside, each of these new complexes retains its traditional character and its insularity because each remains enslaved to entrenched rights and to vested interests.

Ideally, since they all participate in the same main functions, complexes of this kind should be gathered around a common identifiable nucleus at the true level thus providing a visual as well as a physical relationship between the different components. This would have been a truly new vision of urban development, a vision liberated from the constraints inherited from the past centuries. The city centre would have

benefited from a real "place", a specific urban space, physically and visually related to its different components. For none of the present structures, except perhaps the Ville-Marie Plaza, with its somewhat ambiguous role, could be properly called a "plaza" and by consistently granting the French title of "place" to complexes which are nothing of the kind, we run the risk of depriving of their meaning and character the true public "squares" of Montreal, such as Place Jacques-Cartier, Place d'Armes, Victoria Square, Phillips Square, Dominion Square and others.³⁰ We shall again refer to this subject in the conclusion of this book.

4. The Subway

We would be remiss if we ended this analysis of twentieth century Montreal without a few words about the subway and the 1967 World Exhibition, for both these achievements show a great deal of originality and vitality and have significantly contributed to Montreal's long and proud architectural tradition. We shall first consider the subway.

The first network composed of three lines totalling 14 miles and 26 stations became operational in October 1966. The idea of building a subway in Montreal dates as far back as 1910; the preliminary report on the 1944 master plan recommended a network very similar to what we have today. The vigorous campaign conducted by Mayor Drapeau and claiming Montreal could

not survive as a metropolis without a subway was certainly a decisive factor.³¹ Going ahead however, was out of question unless the existence of certain basic conditions justified the venture. Such conditions included a sufficient density of population and a reasonable concentration of activities.

These conditions were only achieved in the second half of the XXth century. In 1961, the population of the administrative territory of Montreal was over the million mark with an average of 20,000 residents per square mile. It was further complemented by a population of two million residents in the metro area. At the same time as we have just read, there had been a parallel increase of activities downtown. A subway therefore became possible and its present popularity - over 125 million passengers yearly - is ample proof that its time had come.³²

The Montreal subway, which was a local achievement, is interesting in many respects. First of all, it was not conceived, as in the case of many other subways throughout the world, as an autonomous transportation service, built underground to ensure protection against the weather and to ensure a higher degree of efficiency. Rather, it was conceived as a direct extension of the total traffic pattern, a concept which accounts for some of its most important features.

The two main lines of the network are not exactly

located under the great axial lines of the town, along which activities are generally concentrated, i.e. St-Denis and St-Hubert Streets (north-south) and Ste-Catherine and St. James Streets (east-west), but slightly outside these axes. Taking advantage of the long, narrow blocks of the grid of streets, the north-south line runs under a secondary street, Berri-Lajeunesse; it is therefore halfway between two important arteries, St-Denis Street and St-Hubert Street. The two east-west lines follow a similar pattern. One is located under Maisonneuve Boulevard which is halfway (for the main part of its course) between Sherbrooke and Ste-Catherine. The third line, which is the extension of the north-south line, runs between Vitré Street and Craig Street and is therefore able to serve Dorchester and St. James Streets. In either case, these lines have significantly contributed to the redevelopment of Maisonneuve Boulevard and of the Vitré-Craig valley.³³

In addition to facilitating building operations while the subway was under construction, without disturbing the intensive business activities of these commercial streets, this location also allowed for a better functional and formal integration of the underground transport system into the urban fabric. For instance, access to the stations is provided by way of large halls instead of being compressed along sidewalks, as in most subways. Also, the presence of residual land around

those accesses suggests the possibility of urban redevelopment which could include these volumes. Guy and Atwater Stations have already been developed in this manner. The spaces thus re-distributed away from the heavy traffic of the axial lines, provide room for bus terminals which help to integrate public transport services on the surface with the underground system. Outside the city centre most buses stop at the subway stations which are thus becoming the converging points of all public transport.³⁴

Another aspect of the Montreal subway worth mentioning is the involvement of its architects. This is something new in the sense that the architects from the Public Service and the architects from the private sector were brought under the same leadership. They did not just turn up at the end of the project to put the final touch to structures which had been dictated by strictly technical imperatives; they became involved right from the start, when the programme for the stations was first formulated. The results of their involvement speak for themselves: contrary to most subways around the world, whether Toronto's or Stockholm's, the manner in which traffic and space are both organized in the Montreal subway goes far beyond a mere concern for functional efficiency. At the present time, the only subway involving the active participation of its architects is the Moscow subway.

The single tunnel system with a platform on each side, selected for the Montreal subway, required mezzanines or foot bridges leading to each platform from a single hall. In the opinion of Hans Blumenfeld, this kind of device is ordinarily less satisfying from the point of view of space distribution and traffic identification, than the principle of one central platform giving access on each side to the subway trains.³⁵

In Montreal, thanks to their active involvement, the architects have in most cases succeeded in limiting such inconveniences. They have organized mezzanines and foot bridges so as to provide passengers with a feeling of space which enables them to remain aware of their position in relation to the various lines of traffic. We find a good example of this in the Berri-de-Montigny Station designed by Architects Longpré and Marchand. Berri-de-Montigny is the central transportation for the three subway lines; it is spatially distributed over three main levels which are functionally and visually interconnected.

In spite of the similarity of approach common to most stations, to the problem of spatial organization, and in spite of the unavoidable standardization of traffic patterns and of a certain part of the equipment, those stations display a great deal of variety with respect to volume, the choice of materials and colour and the type of lighting. The combination of these features distract passengers from the monotonous

feeling tunnels often generated in transport of this kind. On the contrary, passengers participate in a rather unique spatial and emotional experience, as the trip rolls on to the beat and rhythm of changing images and impressions. The Montreal subway stations are identified by their volumes, shape, materials, and colours before they are even identified by their name.

It does not follow that they are all of equal architectural value. Some, like Sherbrooke or Beaudry, lack imagination in the distribution of volume as well as in the choice of materials. Others, like Henri-Bourassa convey a cold feeling because of the predominant use of an unattractive covering material. Others still, including Crémazie, display a disconcerting patchwork of odd materials. The stations just described have all been designed by architects from the Department of Public Works. This does not mean, however, that they are all mediocre.³⁶ The station on St. Helen's Island, for instance, completed by the young Architect Dumontier, is particularly striking because of the impression of strength and unity it conveys; this is partly due to the clever use of unfinished concrete. At any rate, and without wishing to be ironical, we may suggest that the few somewhat naïve stations contribute to a better appreciation of those which manage to create a true architectural mood. Among the latter, we should

mention Beaubien, Mont-Royal, Peel and Bonaventure.

Beaubien Station is remarkable in that its architect, Roger d'Astous, has obviously tried to avoid the feeling of confusion and claustrophobia usually prevailing in underground stations. The pedestrian traffic, for instance, follows one sole axis from the urban sidewalks to the platforms. The latter are perpendicular to and perfectly visible from this axis which straddles over them as a mezzanine. To avoid the feeling of claustrophobia, the volume of the station expands as one progresses inside, and daylight is dramatically supplied through a kind of well thrusting its rays downwards forty feet below the ground level. Apart from such features, the station displays the obvious predilection of Roger d'Astous for shapes inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright.³⁷

Peel Station, on the other hand, is equally remarkable even though it is located in a low and narrow space; this was a handicap for a station which was bound to absorb the large and sudden influx of crowds during the rush hours because of its location near the heart of downtown. The crushing feeling was cleverly avoided by the architects who designed a sunk panel ceiling, with high and low volumes alternating. As for the feeling of narrowness, it was remedied by adding rhythm to the inside volumes through a series of twin columns. The mezzanine leading to the platforms follows the axis of the

tracks; it consists of one large but thin slab. Architects Papineau, Gérin-Lajoie and Leblanc designed this station which bears witness to the structural sense and care for details which characterize the work of this firm, which also designed the Quebec Pavilion at the Montreal World Fair. Both designed by Victor Prus, a talented architect from Montreal, Mont-Royal and Bonaventure stations are like extensions of the urban scene above. To achieve this purpose he relied on two main devices: first, he used brick, concrete, tiles, etc., in keeping with the building materials used in the city itself. The second device consisted of leading the passengers through a sequence of spatial experiences commonly found in the city and closer to the city's scale than to that of a building. In this respect, Bonaventure Station is more captivating in our view, than Mont-Royal Station. It is an important station since it constitutes a converging point for the underground passages leading pedestrians to Windsor Station, Central Station, Place Bonaventure, Place du Canada and, in the future, to Chaboillez Square. It is true urban crossroad set in a fascinating volume created by a sequence of groined vaults.³⁸ (Pl. 75)

We should now finally elaborate on a few technical features of our subway which show the creative way in which it has been adapted to existing conditions in Montreal. The subway cars, designed by Jacques Guillon, depart from the standards

commonly applied in North America. The usual car which is 75 feet long by 10 feet wide has been replaced by a smaller car 57 feet long by 8 feet 3 inches wide which has several advantages. With four doors on each side, the short length of the car helps to reduce the parallel shift of passengers inside of it. This in turn accelerates entry and exit. The capacity of the whole train, with its 500 feet length, is as large as that of the other American subways, as the train is made up of nine cars instead of six. There is also an economic advantage to the smaller cars: as they are narrower, both tracks may be laid in one, single-span, 23 feet wide tunnel. These cars possess another important characteristic: they are equipped with rubber tires. This French innovation, first introduced in Montreal by the French consultants of the Régie Autonome des Transports Parisiens, presents many advantages compared to the metal-wheel equipment used on this continent. Besides ensuring smooth and noiseless transport, the rubber tires provide for faster acceleration and deceleration, thus reducing the minimum safe distance required between trains. The most important advantage of the rubber-tire wheels combined with small cars is to allow greater flexibility in track design, either horizontally (because of the short radius of the curves), or vertically - because of possible gradients 6%. In Montreal, this feature allowed the tunnel to be built for the major part right into the rock and to cross under the St. Lawrence River with a minimum of difficulty.³⁹

5. Man and his World

One could not think of a better conclusion to this volume than a visit to the World Fair which took place in Montreal in the summer of 1967 and which has since re-opened its doors every summer under the name of Man and his World (Terre des hommes). We need not describe it here: the public in general, whether in Montreal or abroad, is sufficiently acquainted with it. Nor do we have to elaborate on the interest it has raised. It has met with astounding success, attracting some 50 million visitors in 1967, while hundreds of newspaper and magazine articles praised its attractive and interesting aspects.

Yet, we must emphasize that the success of the World Exhibition was for a large part due to the quality of its planning, the principles of which also apply to the city itself. This is all the more interesting in that exhibitions in the past have often exerted a definite influence on urban architecture and development or have at least anticipated important developments in these fields.

The famous Crystal Palace, for instance, built for the London Exhibition in 1851, heralded for the first time large-scale pre-fabrication in the building industry. The same can be said of the Machine Gallery, by Contamin, and of the Eiffel Tower, the two most impressive structures of the

Paris World Fair in 1889. The Stockholm Exhibition of 1930 was also a turning point in the evolution of modern architecture.

From the urban point of view, the most influential of those world fairs was probably the Chicago Exhibition in 1893. Designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, the great landscaping architect, it was truly, as Hitchcock called it, "a great "White City", the most complete new urbanistic concept to be realized since the replanning of Paris and Vienna in the third quarter of the century."⁴⁰ Essentially Academic or Beaux-Arts in style, it was characterized by the symmetrical grouping of large classical buildings, complete with dome and antique-style columns surrounding a formal courtyard. Architect Sullivan has rightly criticized this kind of architecture on the grounds that it was based on fiction and on a lie, that it borrowed its inspiration from the Greco-Roman buildings, at time when he himself as well as others, such as William Le Baron Jenney, were producing masterpieces of commercial architecture. Yet one cannot totally assess the influence of the Chicago Exhibition from such a negative point of view, for it generated in the American public from every wake of life both interest and taste for civic order and for the beauty of these displays. Considered from this angle, it can be said that the Chicago Exhibition gave a new impulse to urban planning in the

U.S.A. and this brought about some happy results in a number of cities. We may even probably assume that the big axial thoroughfares that are so basic to the very structure of Town of Mount Royal are reminiscent of its influence.⁴¹

We can only welcome the prospect of witnessing some day the impact of Expo 67 on the development of Montreal and other towns. Its masterplan was even better than the design of its most successful pavilions - which merely illustrated some already well-known trends - and possessed undeniable qualities with promising features for the improvement of the urban environment.

To understand the essence of this masterplan, we should remember that the site selected for Expo 67, as dramatic as it appeared, constituted an enormous challenge: how was unity to be achieved, on such a large scale, among four different sites (the McKay Jetty, St. Helen's Island, Notre-Dame Island, and La Ronde) separated by the arms of the river?⁴² Providing a global structure that would be rigid enough to ensure the necessary functional and visual order, but also flexible enough to allow for all the desirable variety is another problem common to any exhibition of that scale. The adherence to two basic concepts provided a reasonable measure of success in this respect. First, unity was achieved through a hierarchy of transport networks, each of them with its own

particular scale and speed; these networks were designed to enable the visitor to get acquainted with the site as a whole, without missing its details. The second basic concept was to achieve unity by grouping around a central theme a certain number of sub-themes corresponding to the main sectors of the Exhibition. The central focus of each of these sectors was therefore to be a theme pavilion illustrating a special aspect of the general theme. This pavilion would also be the transfer point for the various transport networks.⁴³

The basic system, or frame, on which the whole hierarchy of transports was to be grafted, was the Expo Express, a railway train with a capacity of 30,000 passengers per hour. It ran on an elevated track from Place d'Accueil (Pointe St-Charles) right into the heart of each sector of the Exhibition, i.e. St. Helen's Island, Notre-Dame Island and La Ronde, thus providing a physical link as well as visual continuity between the four sites. It seems to have achieved both aims. Not only did it transport visitors efficiently but, as subsequent polls demonstrated, those who used the Expo Express were better able to picture the grounds of the Fair than the other visitors.⁴⁴

Elevated stations located close to each of the theme pavilions and bedecked with brightly coloured materials also contributed to illustrate the basic visual concept of the system.

There was only one weakness in the Expo Express

network: it did not provide any direct connection with the Montreal subway: St. Helen's Station, on St. Helen's Island, was too far from the Expo Express Station. This used to confuse the visitors who used the subway to come to Expo.

A second network, the mini-rail, was integrated into the first and played an important role in encouraging closer contact with the environment of each of the exhibition areas. Running at a slower and more leisurely speed than the Expo Express, the mini-rail, with its small open carriages, winding along on its tracks well above the ground, allowed the visitors to get a more detailed look at the general picture perceived from the Expo-Express circuit. It was also a stimulating spatial experience: most of those who took a trip on the Notre-Dame mini-rail agree that it left them with the most memorable impression they could hope to retain of their visit to Expo 67.

The other transport sub-systems did not, however, achieve a comparable success. It had been suggested at an early state that boats sailing on the many waterways of Notre-Dame Island might be an attractive means of transport. Unfortunately, the visitors seem to have deliberately ignored this system, possibly because the view of Expo from below was less interesting than the view from above. While the Expo Express and the mini-rail maintained a strict segregation between

transports of different scales and speed, there was no such segregation between the surface paths leading directly to the pavilions. Every kind of vehicle, whether motorized or manual, including the pedicabs, were authorized on those alleys, which disturbed the pedestrians, even though they were not always aware of it. (Pl. 76)

The hierarchy imposed on traffic movements certainly made for a high degree of synthesis among the various elements of a plan conceived as an operational and dynamic unit. On the other hand, the idea of theme pavilions for each and every sector of the exhibition, which was meant to emphasize the unity of the whole, was not, in our opinion, a complete success. The theme pavilion of Notre-Dame Island, for instance, Man at Work, seemed somewhat drowned in the midst of impressive large-scale structures, while its counterpart on St. Helen's Island (Man and his Universe) was truly a focal point, well related to the neighbouring structures. One wonders how many people did actually realize that both pavilions were part of a unifying device. To provide truly conceptual and visual links between the various sites of the exhibition, such structures should have been more conspicuous in the general landscape of Expo.

Among the other features of the master plan, we should mention the general lay-out which was distinctly urban.

It was characterized by the closely-knit structure of the built-up areas. This helped to enhance the scale of the plazas, the recesses and other open spaces and to emphasize the contrast with the natural environment, namely the river and the parks on St. Helen and Notre-Dame Islands. The distribution of the pavilions according to their respective appeal to the public (U.S.A. - U.S.S.R. - Canada...) so as to channel the crowds towards areas of lesser interest enabled the planners to maintain a general balance based on the geometrical - though by no means rectangular - pattern of the ground and water thoroughfares. And finally, everyone agrees that the different service equipment - from the snack bar to the telephone booths and the camp-sites, were well designed, well built and were well integrated with the general surroundings.⁴⁵

This global development conferred on the different areas a certain overall unity and clarity and an orderly and harmonious balance combined with great diversity. This illustrates once more a principle of urban development which has unfortunately disappeared from the cities of today, viz. that the whole should be more significant than the sum total of its parts and components. Is this principle still applicable to our cities today? The question remains unanswered. Here the planners were presented with a virgin site, with three quarters of it built from scratch and free from any previous

structure or any vested interests; they were, moreover, granted an unrestricted budget combined with more control over the actual development of the plan than is usually the case. These are factors which contributed to the image of Man and his World as the prefiguration of a dream city rather than as of a possible town.

As for the architecture of the various components of the Fair, it was not revolutionary; neither was its overall plan, the principles and concepts of which had been known for a very long time. Indeed, we have only to think of Venice, that masterpiece of organization. Yet, the principal merit of Montreal's Exhibition was to have superbly illustrated, through its best pavilions, certain already well-known trends. The best example of such illustration is the principle of the building as an "envelope" which was illustrated in the pavilions of the U.S.A., Germany, Ontario and Quebec, as well as in the theme pavilions. The idea, essentially, is that of a climatic barrier surrounding the several functions distributed over several levels and served by a network of services traffic.

The American pavilion, a huge geodisic dome, designed by Buckminster Fuller, was the most straightforward example of this idea of a climatic "envelope", for it was completely isolated from the three-dimensional traffic and service

network. A remarkable feat indeed, but already practically achieved a century before with the Crystal Palace in London and the Galerie des machines in Paris. Considering its 250 feet diameter and 6,700,000 cubic-foot volume, covered with an acrylic envelope, one hesitates to refer to it as a building. The American dome could have easily sheltered the whole town centre of a small community and it is for this type of use that its prospects seem the most promising.

Unlike the envelope of the American geodisic dome, the climatic envelope of the theme pavilions did not bring all the various functions together under the same cover, but it dealt in a highly flexible manner with the individuality of functional spaces and their service networks. The design of the theme pavilions was based on the universal cell of the truncated tetrahedron which proved to be the most practical geometric form because of the great flexibility of patterns made possible by the juxtaposition of modules. Yet, esthetically speaking, the pavilions were disappointing. For a variety of reasons, among which was the complete failure to standardize and prefabricate the structural components, they looked particularly heavy, and lacked elegance. Their design seemed unable to bring a satisfactory solution to the problem of environmental and climatic protection. Incidentally, the architects responsible for the pavilions were the same architects who designed

the Place Bonaventure Shopping Centre. In either case, they did not seem to succeed in entirely doing away with the traditional concept of façades.⁴⁶

The German pavilion appears to be much more satisfactory; it is also the best individual architectural achievement of the whole exhibition. Completed by Frei Otto and Rolf Gutbrod, it won the enthusiastic approval of the critics who hailed it as a major architectural innovation which would be called upon to assume a leading role in the city of tomorrow. Here as with the Ontario pavilion, there was no compromise: it was just a roof, or rather a tent, without any reference whatsoever to articulated buildings; it was a bare shelter from which the very notions of façades and doors had been eliminated. It was reminiscent of the large circus tent under which spectators may move about freely amidst displays and exhibits. It relied on sound construction principles, resorting to poles to hold a net of tight steel cables which supported a plastic sheet. It was light, inexpensive, easy to assemble, and easy to dismantle and possessed a profound lyricism which, at night, had a magical fairy-tale quality.

The Quebec pavilion was also an outstanding success at night, and, in a way, it was also an envelope, though a rather formal one. It is the joint achievement of Quebec architects Papineau, Gérin-Lajoie et Leblanc, and displayed the

simplicity and the concern for quality and detail that have made the fame of the Mies-Van-der-Rohe. Ada Louise Huxtable, New York Time's critic on architecture, referred to it as the "Barcelona Pavilion of Expo 67".⁴⁷ And in the opinion of Peter Blake, it had a style and a dignity that made it more akin to a town hall or a museum than to a pavilion in a fair.⁴⁸ Like most buildings, impregnated with formal dignity and solemnity, it may well age faster than its German and Ontario counterparts.

CONCLUSION

The history of the evolution of Montreal described in the previous chapters may be divided into three different states: pre-industrial, industrial and metropolitan. Each of these periods has generated a characteristic type of human community and of architecture.

During the pre-industrial stage, the European settlers were too concerned with adjusting to the environment of the new continent to try to control it. This is reflected in the patterns of settlement (the "côte", the "rang" or range) and in popular architecture. This dependency on the environmental forces arose from the fact that man had only achieved a limited mastery of energy: he was confined to the control of live energy (men, animals) and to the use of rather primitive means of converting inanimate energy: windmills and watermills. Consequently, and for historical reasons which it is not our purpose to discuss here, the main economic activities were directly related to the environmental resources which seemed the easiest to exploit: farming and the fur trade.

During this period, the Island of Montreal was essentially a rural territory, a true "ecological" human environment, physically structured by the subdivisions of the "côte", socially organized by the parish, economically and politically integrated into the seignorial system. Villages

and hamlets, like Pointe-Claire and Pointe-aux-Trembles, were built at strategic points. The most important concentration of dwellings was centered around the Town of Montreal. However, since it closely depended for its subsistence on the food surplus of its hinterland, its growth, partly scheduled by the development scheme of the Sulpician Dollier de Casson, was rather slow: two centuries after its foundation (1842), the town's population had not even reached the 40,000 mark. Thus, a stable balance prevailed between clustered and scattered dwellings.

The Market Place was the focal point of the small town and reflected the dependence of the latter on the rural community. It was an indispensable meeting place where farmers, city-dwellers, craftsmen and tradesmen exchanged their goods. Its functions were complemented by Place d'Armes, the social core of the community, bounded by the parish church and the seignors' residence (the old St-Sulpice Seminary). Until the end of the pre-industrial period, the public square was to remain a characteristic urban feature, as the subsequent planning and construction of Place Jacques-Cartier and Victoria Square tend to show.

During the second state of development, the mastery over inanimate energy, through mechanical convertors and the subsequent economic revolutions, completely upset the

patterns of production and of settlement of the land. The steamship, the railway and the telegraph helped to polarize the economic activities of Montreal and emphasize its privileged geographic position. On the human level, foreign immigration from different countries came as a forecast of the cosmopolitan nature of the city. Parallel to these trends, the mechanization of the means of production, the division and specialization of labour required more manpower and appropriate production workshops, thus dissociating for the first time the place of work from the residence. This signalled the onset of the town's development by attracting the rural population to the town. It had taken two centuries for the urban population to reach the 40,000 mark: fifty years later, the population figure greatly exceeded 200,000 (219,616 in 1891). In turn, the availability of an undemanding and abundant labour force stimulated industrialization. Because of the lack of training and education of these workers, the industrialization was mainly focused on the production of non-durable consumer goods. The concentration of labour in industries where wages and technology were equally low would be reflected in the poverty prevailing in the working class suburbs, in the "City below the hill".

From now on, the population would be distributed according to employment opportunities. Industries dependent on

raw materials and heavy transport would settle along the port, Lachine Canal and along railways which complemented the waterways. Thus, the first industrial municipalities and suburbs were created: Ste-Anne, St-Henri, Ste-Cunégonde, Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, etc. The industries such as the clothing industry, which depended on both the availability of labour and the proximity of a market, would tend to follow the demographic thrust, which was predominant along the axis of St. Lawrence Boulevard. Under Msgr. Bourget's influence the old parish, which used to cover the whole city, was fragmented into as many independent units as were deemed necessary to answer the social and spiritual needs of the newly implanted populations.

With the introduction of the first public transport, starting with animal traction and followed by electricity-driven cars, a low density residential belt developed on the periphery, beyond the first residential areas of the industrial era. The Plateau Mont-Royal and Verdun districts belong to this belt, and their houses with outside stairs providing access to apartments built one on top of the other are typical of the period. Only those who enjoyed greater mobility, the rich who controlled trade and industry - they were mostly British - could afford the best locations, especially on the slopes of Mount Royal, Westmount, the Square Mile, Outremont... The

architecture of their mansions bears witness to their excessive wealth. Here lies the origin of the "two solitudes" of a city divided between anglophones and francophones, between the rich and the poor, between Westmount and St-Henri.

At this time, the city centre was turned into a stockyard (as witnessed by the presence of grain elevators) and into an administrative and distribution centre for industrial production. Land in the city centre became a commodity and since commercial buildings were in high demand - their architecture was rather astounding at the beginning - they replaced on Côteau St-Louis the residential and social functions inherited from the previous centuries and invaded almost every available space, private or public, stopping short only of the streets.

All in all, the street seems to have been the main feature of the industrial era in Montreal. The street became the physical link between the city centre, its industries, and the living quarters, or, in other words, between the place of management and production and the residence of both producers and consumer. In an urban area eagerly striving to earn its daily bread and to achieve economic growth, could one think of a more appropriate communication network than the one provided for by the orthogonal grid already implanted in the land by the former occupants under the "côte" system? At

a time when the dynamics of concurrent forces were a substitute for planning, the orthogonal grid of streets was taken for granted because it was the simplest way of ensuring proper communications and of maximizing the profits made by the land speculators and by the builders of row-houses. Even the square, which used to be the dealers' favourite meeting place was now replaced by the shopping street, for business was now benefiting from the dynamics of communications. Ste-Catherine, Ontario, Mont-Royal, St. Lawrence and St-Hubert Streets bear witness to this new trend.

While we must generally deplore the environment produced by the techno-economic drive in the working-class areas, in the well-to-do areas, the result was more serene. The solace which the Victorian upper-class used to seek in nature, to offset its cultural insecurity and to justify its philosophy of "laissez-faire", is reflected in the urban architecture and design. The Victorian street was a place where daily business and recreation activities were conducted at a much slower and relaxing pace than they are today. It appeared as an exuberant decor, mainly due to the emphasis laid on façades by the architecture of the time. The town itself was embellished with squares, churchyards and romantic parks, among which Dominion Square, the Protestant Cemetery and Mount Royal Park are worth mentioning for the exceptional quality of their

display.

In the present stage of development, other deep changes were taking place. They may be traced to the real revolution which occurred in the field of intra-urban transport and communications: the telephone, radio and television; the internal combustion engine (cars, trucks, ... etc.), which replaced the messenger, the horse and the streetcar. The mastery over machinery and electronics would now affect the economy and launch a powerful centrifugal trend scattering the city towards the outskirts and counterbalancing the centripetal trend that had prevailed all through the industrial period. The city now tended to expand its limits as far as the new means of communication would allow; the railway was no longer the backbone of all transport; it was being superseded by the road, which was more versatile; the densely populated industrial areas were being replaced by the suburbs and the commercial street by the shopping centre. Can we still speak of a city in the traditional sense of the word? Are we not rather dealing with a large urbanized area which seems to rely for its identity on its downtown area with its large business complexes (Place Ville-Marie, Place Bonaventure, Victoria Square) which epitomize the mastery over technical skills and the predominance of the service industry?

Around the downtown area and along the axial express roads that lead to it, residential towers are gradually

appearing in answer to the needs of small families and households attracted by the prospects of employment opportunities in the downtown area. On the outskirts of the city the situation is exactly the opposite: single family units prevail; they appeal to large families with a reasonable income. The others, the disadvantaged, have found refuge in the dilapidated areas of the last century for it is only there that they can find roomy accommodation at a reasonable price. It is a greedy fringe that is blindly swallowing up land that could be developed more profitably and more practically, and used for different purposes such as farming or leisure. Initiated by land speculation which is very often encouraged by governments and backed by publicity, this growing wave of low grade cottages appears to be totally unstructured; it is wiping out the landscape and submerging or threatening the identity of the former villages of the island and the plain. In short, Montreal can no longer be perceived or regarded as a global entity; its reality is now immersed in a maze of forms and landscapes, with no relationship to each other, whether conceptual, structural, or visual; they are only held together by hidden economic ties.

Each state of this evolution has imprinted its mark on the developing city, shaping its environment and architecture, and contributing to its image and identity. But

we should not be misled; for these stages have only been isolated for the purpose of our study. Since a city is a dynamic phenomenon the results of each of these periods are intermingled in reality and the physical features inherited from a given period have mostly served as a blue-print for the following age.

This can be demonstrated on a large scale as well as on a small scale. The rural fragmentation of the land is responsible for the standard grid of streets with its very rigid patterns, where even contrasting features such as parks or monuments are subject to the same strict pattern, in spite of their social and cultural pretensions. In the same way, we may find traces of the King's ways of the old "côtes" on our main axial roads: the Metropolitan Boulevard, Côte-de-Liesse Road and Côte-des-Neiges Road, etc. Likewise, the villages of the island and of the plains which today have become poles of attraction for the corrosive suburbs are deeply rooted into the organized network imposed long ago on settlements during troubled times. On a smaller scale, we could quote dozens of examples. Here are just a few: Place d'Armes, for instance, which was a typical urban component of the pre-industrial days, was endowed during the industrial period with its most characteristic monuments: the second Church of Notre-Dame and the Bank of Montreal; while losing its primary role

as a place of exchange, Place d'Armes became a place of leisure, like the Georgian Square. It was once more to forfeit its character in the twentieth century and also, unfortunately, its scale, when it became host to the Aldred and the National Bank of Canada high-rises. Dominion Square, which was originally a peaceful cemetery on the outskirts of the built-up area, was to assume an entirely different significance when its prestige began to attract such centres of activities as Windsor Station, followed by a series of remarkable Victorian buildings which made it something quite unique in urban North America. By and large, in the course of the modern era, most of the downtown squares seem to have played this new role which was to attract the big complexes and the centres of activities. Along the same lines we could also mention the case of Square St-Louis which began as the site of reservoir, or of Lafontaine Park and of St. Helen's Island which were originally military grounds. Thus the "dynamic perennality" of structures implanted in the ground at various times appears to be a basic feature in the development of our city, without which it would be hard to explain how it acquired its present image and personality.

So far, we have only dealt with the material organization of structures and the physical environment. All this would scarcely be of interest were it not immersed in life,

a rich human life with all its ethnic variety, from the indigenous Quebecers - two-thirds of them coming from a rural background -, to the immigrants originating from every European and Asian country. It is a life enriched with various social and cultural characteristics that are reflected in the mentality and behaviour of all the various ethnic districts of the city, whether Jewish or Italian, as well as in some of the streets, from St. Lawrence Boulevard to Park Avenue, or even in the service areas, from Jean-Talon Market to the exotic restaurants. That life seems to be in a permanent state of flux: the Irish cluster around St. Patrick's Church was to give way to Chinatown, while Park Avenue was in succession British, Jewish and now Greek. It is by no means easy to pinpoint the characteristics of a multiform life in a state of flux inner-vig an environment in the making. We can only reach the conclusion that our urban environment is rich in forms, expressions, life and spirit.

From the study of this life and of these physical features, how can we now assess man's intervention in the management of his environment and of his habitation? What guidelines may we draw for the future, bearing in mind that wisdom is not acquired from the listing of historical facts but from their interpretation? At this point some clarification is necessary. It is indeed generally assumed that Montreal, like most American

cities, is the outcome of a set of uncontrolled forces, of the so-called American "dynamism" and that the influence of planned action is practically negligible. This assumption is partly true, but it should be weighed by facts. As regards the American cities, studies such as the ones published by Reps (The Making of Urban America) or by Tunnard and Reed (American Skyline) tend to present the matter in a more balanced perspective. As for our own city, the preceding pages lead us to the conclusion that human intervention played a certain part in its development.

On the one hand, the whole system of settlement of the territory of Quebec and of the Island of Montreal, based on the "rang" and on the "côte" - a territorial unit closely integrated with the political and economic system of the seignory and strongly structured by the parish - generated an "ecological" environment of a rare quality and homogeneity. Even now, Quebec is seeking - as if it were some paradise lost - a form of political, economic, social and cultural unity that would be as satisfying as the unity it enjoyed under the old regime, the very kind of unity which the conquest and the subsequent industrialization had dismantled. On the other hand, all the sectional plans of development have had an undeniable impact on the destiny, the social and cultural composition, the practical organization and the physical environment of our

metropolis. We need only remember the plans of Dollier de Casson and those of the Commissioners in charge of tearing down the fortifications of the old citadel; the plans of the large cemeteries, Mount Royal Park, the Cité-jardin, Nuns' Island; or of Pei's plans for the new downtown area and of the plans of the subway... We should also think of all the deliberate efforts made to improve navigation on the river, to build canals - Lachine Canal, for one - and to convert Montreal into a national port and a turnplate for the railway network.

Whether we consider the architecture and the environment of Montreal - according to periods and circumstances - as the reflection of a natural dynamism or as the result of the intervention of man, one conclusion must be drawn: the results were authentic and valid, in so far as they reflected a balance between the prevailing forces and influences, such as geography, climate, economics and culture.

Thus it appears that the pattern of settlement based on the "côte"-cum-parish-cum-seignory was a remarkable answer to the global circumstances arising from the colonization of a new continent. Indeed, the territorial unit known as a "côte" (as well as the range) prevailed over the more contemporary concept advocated by the ruling class, i.e. the star-shaped villages of Intendant Jean-Talon. The latter concept proved to be a cultural import totally alien to the living

conditions prevailing here. Similarly, the gradual adaptation of the Quebec house to the environmental conditions and to the living habits adopted in such an environment resulted in a much more authentic architecture than the attempts of a Chaussegros de Lery to build Baroque châteaux, copied from these of the European homeland, in New France.

The dichotomy between, on the one hand, the adaptation to the global circumstances of the environment, which is the hall-mark of popular architecture, and, on the other hand, the prevalence of culture which pervades official and academic planning must not be blamed on the French regime only. It was perpetuated throughout the history of Montreal. Thus, for instance, during the Victorian era, all the so-called historical, eclectical or picturesque styles were imported images to which academic architecture held fast at the expense of the deeper roots of our reality. Thus, for instance, was any style ever more alien to our geography, to our vast northern expanses than the Baroque or the neo-Baroque? Was there ever a better example of cultural (and spiritual) colonization than the reduced-scale reproduction of St. Peter's Basilica, planted like a conversation-piece on the threshold of Dominion Square? Was there ever any style less attuned to our climate than that of the French "second empire" or the Picturesque which participated in an orgy of stone, brick, wood, iron and sheet-metal?

It is not revealing to discover that the only authentic architecture of that period - as well as of the previous one, for that matter - remains an architecture that makes no pretense of being one, an architecture without architect, which escapes all entrenched cultural traditions or institutionalized systems? We are obviously not thinking here of Christ Church Cathedral or of Mount Stephen House, but of the industrial house, with its corridors and outside staircases, of commercial architecture with its open, well-lighted plan and its stone skeleton façades and of the grain elevators, those huge machines that have no pretension apart from being functional.

Many people, mainly because of some kind of sentimental ties, are willing to acknowledge the true architectural value of the domestic colonial buildings inspired by the old French models. Yet they adamantly deny it to typical houses such as those built on Plateau Mount Royal or in Verdun. Should one label "architecture" these petty houses whose outside additions of balconies, galleries, staircases and sheds, are really an eye-sore? Why not? Mount Stephen House (and others of its kind), with its large well-lighted rooms, with high-ceiling, its opulent appearance and its smooth surfaces undoubtedly conforms more to our usual idea of architecture. But architecture is not an image; it should be a complete

answer to the needs of a given situation. We are not trying here to condone poorly-lit rooms or suicidal staircases. We have to admit that these typical houses, because of their inside plan and outside complements, their ingenious contrivances so well adapted to the requirements of our climate and to our resources of building materials, as well as their reasonable price made possible by prefabrication and standardization, have provided an appropriate answer to the need for accommodating in a minimum time thousands of rural migrants, particularly those who were disadvantaged.

It does not follow that we should reject, as a whole, the academic architecture we have inherited and abandon it to the mercy of the speculators. Some of those old buildings lack neither charm nor character. For instance, although Victor Bourgeau, like most of his contemporaries, indulged in the historical style, his churches show a distinctive, personal touch, a blend of simplicity and vigour. And the city would certainly be the poorer, were it to lose monuments such as Notre-Dame Church, Bonsecours Market, Windsor Station, the National Library and other similar buildings. This architecture, in addition to being interesting in itself, is a strong reminder of the past. This is one of the essential conditions for humanizing a city; like human beings, it, too, must possess a memory. We must also concede that since it developed in an

environment, this architecture has acquired another dimension by contributing to the urban landscape, and to their identity. In this respect, most of the buildings in Old Montreal, regardless of their style and architectural value, are an integral part of the character of the streets. Similarly, most of our large churches and cathedrals, whether neo-Gothic or Baroque, whether worthy of the historians' attention or not, seem to be irremplaceable as landmarks dominating the city with their tall silhouettes.

Coming back to the present time, we need not look very far in order to find both at the core of the city and on its outskirts, the proof of social and cultural colonialism. It is reflected, as a mirror, in all our suburbs: the mentality, the way of living, the styles, are all imported from the U.S.A. The so-called "colonial" models of New England, the texan "ranches", and the Californian "cottages", or "Spanish Colonial" houses are shamelessly copied and reproduced on a smaller scale to fit the budget of the average consumer. These houses are crowded together in housing developments where the curve of the streets is a substitute for any planning effort. They are often grafted to existing villages or developments, depriving them of their substance and destroying their homogeneity. Even publicity cannot conceal the ridiculous features of these developments, the real motivation of their developers and

contractors, and the lack of concern of the government authorities who encourage them.

Downtown, except for certain complexes, such as Alexis Nihon Plaza, Place Bonaventure or the Château Champlain Tower, which blends in well with the predominant forms of Dominion Square's environment, the new constructions also display the same kind of architecture. Though in most cases it claims allegiance to the modern international style, this architecture seems to become a prisoner in the same manner as Victorian architecture which it had once sought to liberate. Relying on the scientific approach, obeying strict canons, banning every ornament, and exhausting technology to its limit, it represents the quintessence of the drawing board and generates the kind of stereotype forms that are found all around the world, from Timbuktu to Toronto. In spite of all its contradiction, the 1967 World Exhibition had one good point: it brought colour, fancy and an ephemeral quality to an urban landscape which was gradually assuming a pomp and formality best illustrated by the heavy and austere new Court House. We have reason to believe that there is a reaction brewing against the dictatorship of this international modern style. Will it lead to an architecture better able to express the true identity of the community? Or do we have to fear the opposite excess as so often happened in the course of the history of

architecture?

In Montreal as elsewhere, modern town planning seems to be heading towards a dead end. The fact that cities are deteriorating in spite of half a century of scientific town-planning seems like a paradox. Was it not in the very name of town-planning that a highway was built right in the heart of the town, marring landscapes, slashing into residential areas, increasing pollution and adding to the traffic problems of the downtown area? Is it not in the name of town planning that retail shopping centres are proliferating downtown? Pleasant and comfortable as they may be, they only appeal to the wealthier classes, and contribute to the deterioration of another commercial centre, that of Ste-Catherine Street for which nothing has been done. Does this not look like one-way of planning and programming the downfall of the traditional city? Again, is it not in the name of town planning that huge offices and residential towers are allowed to rise downtown as well as on the outskirts? They artificially raise the value of the land to such an extent that other less profitable buildings, in spite of their potential usefulness, are condemned to disappear leaving behind them gigantic gaping holes, marring the beauty of the city.

The main danger of modern town planning is that it is all too often a slave to an all-powerful technological

and economic system which seems only concerned with its own growth. Pollution, in all its aspects, was the result of a blind technical and economic development and may well be the first link in a series of catastrophies, unless the goals of our system are re-assessed and more concerned with people. Above all, we should not deceive ourselves: for the first time in its history, Montreal is at a critical crossroad. We have inherited one of the most remarkable cities in North America but its uniqueness, its quality of life, and its environment are now under the threat of death. The corrosive effect of this socially and economically costly dismantlement and the accelerated ageing of a large part of its urban fabric, the impact of automobile traffic, the ravages of increasing land value generated by the gigantic size of modern complexes, the gradual disappearance of trees, green spaces and monuments of historical or architectural interest, and a municipal policy entirely inspired by the kind of spirit of grandeur which prevailed in Vienna just before the fall of the empire, have all launched Montreal on a very dangerous course. At the bottom of the hill, there lies nothing for the city to expect, but disgust and intolerance. The threat should be taken seriously, for other cities in the world have already reached such an advanced stage of decay.

We may well wonder why there should be this

sudden care-in after three centuries of unthreatened development. In our view - and this is something we have not yet fully come to realize - it happened because both the mechanical and electronic technology for the transformation of energy have become frightfully powerful. They now provide unlimited opportunities in terms of investment profits together with fantastic prospects for rechannelling these profits. This is being achieved by conditioning all human activities through the information media, especially radio and television. Technological revolutions, the history of our city tell us, followed by economic revolutions, are the factors which have truly governed the activities of man, and, consequently, changed the form and structure of our city. We must therefore be master of our technology and of our economy if we want to organize and control our urban environment. The conversion of energy in itself is neither good nor bad: it is a mere tool. Whether it is left in the hands of a blind and anonymous techno-economic system or put at the service of an authentic urban society dedicated to the quality of life should mean the difference between decay or fulfilment for the city. This cannot be achieved without a parallel fulfilment of the citizens themselves, who must be liberated and made more aware so that the weight of their knowledge and participation may become a factor to be reckoned with by town planners. The city and its architecture

represent too complex a phenomenon, too pervaded with the dynamics of life for it to be entrusted to specialists alone.

In order to become creative, awareness and participation must be rooted in the deep reality of our environment. Among other things, citizens must realize that it is economically unsound to entrust the development of the metropolis to the sole interests of the developers and speculators; it is also a folly, for instance, to waste the best farming land in the province to provide space for the development of housing units which already contain the seeds of some of the greatest problems facing the future generations. The way our city has evolved clearly demonstrates that the vested interests and the structures implanted in the soil are terribly permanent: will it be any different the day we have to face the tide of uncontrolled building? Now that the civilization of leisure is at hand and that Montreal is one of the few cities in the world endowed with enough natural resources, to satisfy its needs, it is economically unsound, as well as anti-social to sacrifice those resources for the benefit of an individualistic, liberal economy, to allow rivers to be polluted, to deface the landscapes, to erode the centres of leisure, in brief, to destroy for future centuries, the huge potential our region has in store to promote the quality of life. Our collective future is at stake and at this stage, the solution is of political

nature, for planning must now become a regional matter. A pilot plan such as Horizon 2000 is already a first step in the right direction. Plans of this kind, however, tend to be illusory if they are not accompanied by appropriate legislation and proper enforcement mechanisms.

At a different level, citizens must come to realize that it is up to them to remodel their urban environment in order to answer their daily needs and aspirations. This kind of action, for lack of a better word, may be described as opportunity planning. It does not require any more legislation or mechanism than that is already available to our society. From the parks created out of former quarries or military grounds, from the squares which have contributed to the remodelling of a modern city centre, all the way to the restoration of Old Montreal, the evolution of our city reminds us that many components which have contributed to the identity and the character, the comfort, and the quality of our environment, were indeed acquired through voluntary or accidental renovations of the environment. The opportunities are there: there are old streets to restore, obsolete industrial zones to convert, public properties belonging to parishes, religious entities or corporate bodies, to reclaim and to recycle in the best interest of the community, etc. At such a level, imagination and good will are the best tools for planning.

Let us finally say that this civic awareness traces its inspiration to the earliest tradition. In the course of its history, as we have learned from the present study, Montreal has always found groups or individuals with a deep love for their city, who were willing to improve and embellish it. We may question their achievements, but as long as their spirit of love for the city remains with us, Montreal shall survive through defeats and victories, through ugliness and beauty, alive with hope. This humble work was written in the spirit of that hope.

APPENDIX

NOTES TO CHAPTERS

Chapter 1: The Key to the West

1. William Bennet Munro, ed., Documents Relating to the Seigniorial Tenure in Canada, 1598-1854, pp. 97-98.
2. Relations des Jésuites contenant ce qui s'est passé de plus remarquable dans les missions des Pères de la Compagnie de Jésus dans la Nouvelle-France, 3, year 1663, p. 28. Hereafter: Relations des Jésuites.
3. Marcel Trudel, "Jacques Cartier" in Dictionnaire biographique du Canada, 1, p. 171. Extract from the King's order, dated March 18, 1534. Translation: "to discover islands and countries where it is said that large quantities of gold and other riches might be found".
4. Ibid., pp. 171-172.
5. Ibid., p. 173. Translation: "the road and the beginning of the great river of Hochelaga, a road from Canada which came from so far away, that nobody knows of anyone who ever saw its source".
6. Ibid., p. 174.
7. Many of these cities were built on the site of old French strongholds controlling strategic points of the St. Lawrence empire: e.g., fort Frontenac became Kingston, fort Rouillé became York and then Toronto, fort Pontchartrain became Detroit.
8. Trudel, op. cit., p. 177. Translation: "essential road used by explorers to reach Hudson's Bay, the mysterious horizon of the Western Sea and the Mississippi".
9. Michel Brunet, Guy Frégault et Marcel Trudel, Histoire du Canada par les textes, pp. 41-42. Translation: "drained by the St. Lawrence River as well as beautiful rivers flowing into it on all sides, and through the same rivers, reaching several native nations rich in furs.."
10. Relations des Jésuites, 2, year 1642, p. 36. Translation: "the distance from the mouth of the great river and gulf of St. Lawrence to this island, is about 200 leagues; the whole waterway is navigable either by large vessel or small boats. Furthermore, the island is perfectly accessible to all the nations of this great land; for, from the north and the south, from the east and the west, rivers flow into the St. Lawrence and into the Rivière des Prairies around the Island..."
11. Ibid., year 1651, p. 9. Translation: "it is a very advantageous location for all northern nations wishing to trade with us..."
12. Gustave Lanctôt, Montréal sous Maisonneuve, 1642-1665, p. 16.

13. Raoul Blanchard, L'ouest du Canada français, 1, Montréal et sa région, p. 173-181. (#)
14. Gabrielle Roy, Bonheur d'occasion, p. 29. Translation: "But this house was not only located near the waterways of freighters, it was also near railroads, at the crossroads of the network of the East and of the West and of the waterways of the great city. It was on the road to the oceans, the Great Lakes and the Prairies".
15. Blanchard, op. cit., pp. 58-59.
16. H. P. Biggar, trans., The Voyages of Jacques Cartier, p. 168. Translation: "We were on the mountain (Mount Royal) and were able to see as far as 30 leagues in the distance around the mountain; there, to the north, there is a range of mountains, lying to the east and to the west, and the same to the south. Between these mountains lies the land, the most beautiful to behold, tillable, even and level. And in the midst of this land we see the river..."
17. Blanchard, op. cit., pp. 14-48; see also Montreal, Que., City Planning Department, Physical Characteristics of the Region.
18. Blanchard, op. cit., pp. 48-59; see also Richmond Wilberforce Longley, Le climat de Montréal.
19. Louis-Armand de Lom d'Arce, baron de Lahontan, Voyages du Baron de Lahontan dans l'Amérique septentrionale..., 1, p. 30. Hereafter: Voyages du Baron de Lahontan. Translation: "the 'côtes' or seignories south of the island yield a considerable income, for the buildings are solid, and the inhabitants have a great deal of wheat, cattle, poultry and dozens of other types of foodstuff which they usually sell in the city".
20. Exactly 114,854 acres, excluding Bizard Island or 120,458 acres including the island; 121,775 acres, or 190.30 square miles, including some other islands belonging to some riverside municipalities: Montreal, Que., City Planning Department, Areas of Municipalities, pp. 3-4.
21. Biggar, op. cit., pp. 154-155. Translation: "walked on, and about half a league further, we found beautiful ploughed fields, vast acreages covered with their own bran of wheat, which is like the millet from Brazil, as thick, or even thicker than peas, from which they lived in the same manner as we live from our own wheat. It is in the midst of these fields that the town of Hochelaga is located, near a mountain, around which other fields are ploughed and are very fertile..."
22. Relations des Jésuites, 3, year 1663, p. 28. Translation: "This site is even more beautiful than the others: the island lie at the mouth between the two rivers (the St. Lawrence and the Rivière des Prairies), like beautiful large meadows; some are long, others circular; some are like gardens full of fruits, others like beautiful artifacts of nature, with all manners of attractions for painters of landscapes".

23. Joseph Bouchette, A Topographical Dictionary of the Province of Lower Canada, see "Montreal".
24. This subject will be dealt with in chapter seven.
25. Munro, op. cit., pp. 97-98. Translation: "was almost but a forest of every kind of very large trees, in particular: pine trees, maple trees, elms, beech trees, cherry trees and cedars..."
26. Abbé Charles-Honoré Laverdière, ed., Oeuvres de Champlain, 1, p. 392. Translation: "There are also many fields with rich potters's clay, for bricks and construction, something which is of great usefulness".
27. J. Stanfield, The Pleistocene and Recent Deposits of the Island of Montreal, Canada, pp. 43-50.
28. Blanchard, op. cit., pp. 38-39, 190-203.
29. Marcel Trudel, "Samuel de Champlain" in Dictionnaire biographique du Canada, 1, pp. 192-204.
30. Laverdière, op. cit., p. xxiv. Translation: "to settle along the St. Lawrence River where trade and commerce could better be undertaken than in Acadia".
31. Incidentally, "Quebec" is an Algonquin word meaning "narrowing of the river".
32. Laverdière, op. cit., p. 390. Translation: "in order to find an appropriate place for the location of a settlement and to prepare a building site..."
33. Ibid., pp. 390-392. Translation: "But amongst all the places I saw, the most appropriate place was a small spot which the boats and launches could reach with ease..." - "And near the said Place Royale, there is a small river thrusting deeply into the land. Along the river there are more than 60 arpents of meadowland fit for sowing and gardening. (...) I found this site to be amongst the most beautiful on the river, and immediately ordered that this Place Royale be cleared of all trees to make it even and ready for construction..."
34. Ibid., p. 392. Translation: "and it is easy to channel the water around it, and create a small island, on which to settle as one wishes".
35. This refers to the "Messieurs et Dames de la Société de Notre-Dame de Montréal pour la conservation des Sauvages de la Nouvelle-France".
36. SHM, Les véritables motifs de Messieurs et Dames de la Société de Notre-Dame de Montréal, p. 14. Translation: "to assemble a nation composed of French and natives, the latter to be converted so as to render them sedentary. They would be taught to cultivate the land, would be united under the same discipline, and practice the Christian way of life..."

37. Letter from the members of the "Société" to Pope Urbain VIII in 1643, quoted in (Etienne-Michel Faillon), Histoire de la colonie française au Canada, 1, p. 398 (#). Translation: "for eighty barbaric nations, a centre likely to attract them, because rivers lead to it from all directions".
38. See Lanctôt, op. cit., pp. 150-151; John William Reys, The Making of Urban America; a History of City Planning in the United States, pp. 68-71. (#)

Chapter 2: The Island Colony

1. Steen Eiler Rasmussen, London the Unique City, p. 16.
2. John Summerson, Georgian London, pp. 17-18.
3. Ibid., p. 18.
4. Donald Creighton, Dominion of the North; a History of Canada, pp. 110-112. (#)
5. Ibid., pp. 13-14.
6. Gustave Lanctôt, Montréal sous Maisonneuve, 1642-1665, pp. 23-24.
7. This war was not continuous, but interspersed by periods of peace.
8. Marcel Trudel, Le Régime seigneurial.
9. Creighton, op. cit., pp. 45-46.
10. See the reconstruction from a map drawn by Franquet in 1752, in Marcel Trudel, Atlas de la Nouvelle-France, p. 118.
11. "Arrêts & règlements des intendants du Canada", January 24, 1667. Quoted in (Etienne-Michel Faillon), Histoire de la colonie française en Canada, 3, pp. 342-343 (#). Translation: "This manner of distributing a recently conquered country, is in keeping with the old Roman usage which consisted in distributing to the soldiers the fields of the conquered provinces which they called praedia militaria. In my opinion, this practice by countries which were as able in politics as they were fierce at war could justifiably be introduced in a country separated from its ruler by 1000 leagues. This separation might force such a country to rely entirely on its own forces". Concerning this "military plan of Talon", see Dorothy A. Heneker, The Seigneurial Regime in Canada, pp. 71ss; William Bennet Munro, "Historical Introduction and Explanatory Notes" in Documents Relating to the Seigneurial Tenure in Canada, pp. xxxvss.

12. Munro, op. cit., p. xxxv.
13. Ibid., p. 116. Translation: "very attractive and most suitable and had the only storehouse between Montreal, Three-Rivers and Chambly".
14. Ibid., p. 111. Translation: "estate, with all its dependences, is among the most beautiful and most even in Canada; its inhabitants are amongst the most affluent in the system".
15. Concerning these concessions by intendant Talon, see Faillon, op. cit., pp. 346ss.
16. Ibid., p. 351. Translation: "with the obligation to settle there themselves, to cultivate the land, and attract colonists, especially discharged soldiers whom they had previously had under their command".
17. Ibid., pp. 345-346. Translation: "fortifying the land against the Iroquois was one of the King's aims in granting land; the fiefs which he granted his officers were therefore almost all located near the Island of Montreal and on the shores of the rivers used by the barbarians: the Richelieu river and the St. Lawrence river, from Lake St-Pierre onwards". - "they settled with a number of their soldiers who became farmers and they (the officers) formed the nucleus from which various towns grew, which, with Ville-Marie, became the bulwark of the french colony".
18. William Henry Atherton, Montreal, 1, p. 212 (#); Alan Gowans, Church Architecture in New France, pp. 99-155 (#).
19. Alexandre Jodoin, "Le château de Longueuil", BRH; 6, no. 3, mars 1900, pp. 76-78.
20. Richard Colebrook Harris, The Seigniorial System in Early Canada; a Geographical Study, p. 176ss.
21. Joseph Bouchette, A Topographical Dictionary of the Province of Lower Canada, see "Longueuil" and "Chambly".
22. Munro, op. cit., p. 110. Translation: "in spite of the necessity to complete it in order to be able to come quickly to the rescue of Chambly in case of attack, whereas presently help must come after thirty six leagues of voyage on water".
23. Bouchette, op. cit., see "Chambly". Translation: "which generated a lot of activity".
24. Ibid., "Berthier".
25. Guy Frégault, "Le régime seigneurial et l'expansion de la colonisation dans le bassin du St-Laurent au dix-huitième siècle", CHAR, 1944, p. 66.
26. Raoul Blanchard, L'Ouest du Canada français, 1, Montréal et sa région, pp. 60-73 (#).

27. Max Derruau, "A l'origine du "rang" canadien", CGQ, 1, 1956, pp. 39-47.
28. See Harris, op. cit., pp. 179ss. See also Pierre Deffontaine, "The Rang-Pattern of Rural Settlement in French Canada", in French-Canadian Society, 1, Sociological Studies, pp. 3-19.
29. In 1671, three of these noble fiefs had already been granted: one to Lambert Closse, another, near fort Ville-Marie, to Hautmesnil, and a third one, more to the west, to the Sieur de La Salle. This fief was named at first St-Sulpice, then Lachine.
30. H. Beaugrand, ed., et P.L. Morin, dr., Le Vieux Montréal 1611-1803, n. p.
31. Olivier Maurault, "Les moulins du séminaire" in Marges d'histoire, 3, Saint-Sulpice, p. 126. The ruined windmill one can see today at Pointe-aux-Trembles was probably built in 1718, and is probably the second mill built on this "arrière-fief".
32. Gowans, op. cit., p. 113.
33. Beaugrand et Morin, op. cit., n. p.; Maurault, op. cit., p. 127; Gowans, op. cit., p. 122.
34. For more details concerning the concession of these noble fiefs, see Faillon, op. cit., pp. 337ss.
35. Ibid., p. 342. Translation: "by creating these fiefs and by handing them over to the military, the seigniors of Montreal did their best to protect the colonists and to enable the island to defend itself..." For further information on the redoubts and the chapel, see Beaugrand et Morin, op. cit., n. p. and Gowans, op. cit., p. 131.
36. Jean de Laplante, "La communauté montréalaise", CESH, 1, 1952, pp. 57-107.
37. Québec (Province), "Aveu et dénombrement de Messire Louis Normand, prêtre du séminaire de Saint-Sulpice de Montréal,..." in RAPQ, p. 94. Hereafter: "Aveu et dénombrement de Messire Louis Normand". Translation: "above the church and adjacent to it, the fort is built on a lot measuring one hundred fathoms by ninety fathoms. It stands at Pointe-aux-Trembles, enclosed with stakes, flanked and bastioned, and contains the church of l'Enfant Jésus, built of stonework..."
38. Ibid., p. 94 and p. 135. Translation: "into lots distributed into streets like in the town" - "a village had been built, measuring one arpent and belonging to the said seigneurs..."
39. Harris, op. cit., pp. 176ss.
40. Munro, op. cit., p. 101.
41. Québec (Province), "Le recensement des gouvernements de Montréal et des Trois-Rivières" in RAPQ 1936-1937, p. 119.

42. Munro, op. cit., p. 99. Translation: "the inhabitants used to grow rich from their trade with the natives who disembarked there when they came to Montreal. But since the destruction wreaked there by the Iroquois in 1689, who burned the houses and took most of the inhabitants as prisoners, the parish has regressed in every manner".
43. Ibid., p. 101. Translation: "because the Iroquois killed most of the inhabitants, the growth of the settlement was retarded."
44. Joseph Bouchette, Description topographique de la province du Bas Canada..., pp. 138 and 142-143. Translation: "Lachine is the most important village on the whole island, for it is the centre of all trade between the Upper and the Lower province, as well as with the north-western region" - "with its 90 or 100 houses, built in a regular pattern, the highway is intersected at right angles by small streets".
45. See Joseph Bouchette, A Topographical Dictionary of the Province of Lower Canada.
46. Beaugrand et Morin, op. cit., n. p.
47. Arthur R. M. Lower, Canadians in the Making. A Social History of Canada, pp. 41-42 (#).
48. Harris, op. cit., pp. 186ss; Jean-Charles Falardeau, "The Seventeenth Century Parish in French-Canada" in French Canadian Society, 1, Sociological Studies, p. 22.
49. Marcel Trudel, Atlas de la Nouvelle-France, pp. 172-173.
50. "Aveu et dénombrement de Messire Normand", p. 145. Translation: "That in the area of the said Côte St-Michel, divided into two ranges of inhabitants by a common two arpents wide, in the middle of which there is a Kingsway, running from the northeast to southwest..."
51. Munro, op. cit., p. 97. Translation: "is subdivides into six parishes: Montreal, Lachine, Haut de l'Isle, the Pointe au Tremble, the Rivière des Prairies and the Mission du Sault au Récollet".
52. Ibid. Translation: "belong the inhabitants of the côtes from Verdun to Longue-Pointe, as well as from half of Côte St-Pierre and St-Paul, the Côtes de Notre-Dame-des-Neiges, de Liesse, des Vertues, St-Laurent, Ste-Catherine and St-Michel and la Visitation".
53. Ibid., p. 101. Translation: "parish of Pointe-aux-Trembles to which côte St-Lionnard belongs..."
54. "Carte de l'Île de Montréal désignant les chemins publics, les paroisses, les fiefs et les villages qui s'y trouvent, le canal Lachine, les différentes parties de l'Île qui ne sont pas encore en état de culture, etc., etc., faite en 1834 par A. Jobin".

55. "Aveu et dénombrement de Messire Louis Normand", p. 88.
56. See E.-Z. Massicotte "Notre-Dame-des-Neiges" in Les cahiers des dix, 4, pp. 141-166.
57. With the exception of the Côtes St-Charles, St-Jean and des Sources, in the western part of the island, where the strips of land ran from the south-west to the north-east in keeping with some features of the natural topography of the region.
58. Jacques Godbout, "La Côte-des-Neiges", Liberté, 5, no. 4, juillet-août 1963, p. 303. Translation: "Côte-des-Neiges is one of Montreal's few districts still retaining a life of its own, which is easily identifiable".
59. Marcel Bélanger, "De la région naturelle à la région urbaine: problèmes d'habitat" in Architecture et urbanisme au Québec, p. 54.
60. Hans Blumenfeld, The Modern Metropolis; its Origins, Growth, Characteristics and Planning, p. 27 (#).

Chapter 3: Society During the Old Regime

1. Pierre-François-Xavier de Charlevoix, Histoire et description générale de la Nouvelle-France avec le journal historique d'un voyage fait par ordre du roi dans l'Amérique septentrionale, 3, pp. 137-138.
2. Ramsay Traquair, The Old Architecture of Quebec, p. 93.
3. Canada, Ministry of Agriculture, Census of Canada, 1870-71, 4, 1665-1871, pp. 2-48. Hereafter: Census of Canada (1665-1871).
4. The site of this first building of the Hôtel-Dieu, built in 1644, was located on the north-east corner of St-Paul and St-Sulpice streets. The first chapel of Notre-Dame-de-Bonsecours was built in 1657.
5. H. Beaugrand, ed., et P.L. Morin, dess., Le Vieux Montréal 1611-1803, n. p.
6. (Etienne-Michel Faillon), Histoire de la colonie française en Canada, 3, p. 375 (#).
7. Census of Canada (1665-1871), pp. 64-68: an appraisal according to the census of 1765.
8. Ibid.
9. Constance McLaughlin Green, The Rise of Urban America, p. 11 (#).
10. Ibid., pp. 30-31.

11. See Georges Langlois, Histoire de la population canadienne-française, pp. 33-60 and 187-230 (#).
12. This is, according to Jean Hamelin, the distribution of French immigration over a period of 150 years.

1608-1640:	296	French	immigrants	settled	in	New	France
1640-1660:	964	"	"	"	"	"	"
1660-1680:	2542	"	"	"	"	"	"
1680-1700:	1092	"	"	"	"	"	"
1700-1720:	659	"	"	"	"	"	"
1720-1740:	1008	"	"	"	"	"	"
1740-1760:	3565	"	"	"	"	"	"
1608-1760:	10126	"	"	"	"	"	"

Jean Hamelin, Economie et société en Nouvelle-France, p. 77.
13. Joseph-Noël Fauteux, Essai sur l'industrie au Canada sous le régime français, 1, p. xii.
14. Arthur R.M. Lower, Canadians in the Making. A Social History of Canada, pp. 15-17 (#).
15. Hamelin, op. cit., p. 77.
16. Ibid., pp. 79-84.
17. SHM, Voyage de Kalm en Amérique, p. 45. Translation by the author.
18. Alan Gowans, Building Canada: an Architectural History of Canadian Life, p. 15 (#).
19. Gérard Morisset, L'architecture en Nouvelle-France, p. 15 (#).
 Translation: "the spirit of Romanesque style on the bare walls pervading the architecture of our earlier past..."
20. Richard Colebrook Harris, The Seigniorial System in Early Canada; a Geographical Study, p. 172.
21. Fernand Ouellette, Histoire économique et sociale du Québec, 1760-1850. Structures et conjoncture, pp. 559ss (#).
22. W.J. Eccles, "Buade de Frontenac et de Palluau, Louis de" in Dictionnaire biographique du Canada, 1, pp. 137-146.
23. Ibid., p. 138.
24. Pierre-Georges Roy, La ville de Québec sous le régime français, 1, p. 389. Translation: "I think it was a grievous mistake to have allowed private citizens to build houses to suit themselves, without any order" - "to mark the roads and squares to be built, so that later on when private citizens wish to build they may be able to do so with symmetry and in such a manner as may enhance the decoration and ornamentation of the city".

25. Lower, op. cit., p. 46. As a matter of fact, this title should have been given to Champlain or Dollier de Casson.
26. John William Reys, The Making of Urban America; a History of City Planning in the United States, pp. 65-68 (#).
27. Yves F. Zoltvany, "Rigaud de Vaudreuil, Philippe de" in Dictionnaire biographique du Canada, 2, pp. 591-600.
28. Gustave Lanctôt, Images et figures de Montréal sous la France, p. 73.
29. Gowans, op. cit., p. 25.
30. See Marie-Madeleine Aazard-Malaurie, "De l'architecture monumentale classique à Québec", Vie des Arts, no. 49, hiver 1967-1968, pp. 42-49.
31. Guy Frégault, Le XVII^e siècle canadien: études, p. 87. Translation: "look like brothers... they are in fact brothers. They come from the same social class and sometimes even from the same families. They hold similar views on public life, on authority and on the precedence and prestige attaching to their functions".
32. Ibid., p. 131. Translation: "that their origin is unknown, like that of the Nile".
33. Alan Gowans, Church Architecture in New France, pp. 52-53.
34. Ibid., pp. 40-47.
35. Olivier Maurault, "Un professeur d'architecture à Québec en 1828", JRAIC, 3, no. 1. January-February 1926, p. 32.
36. Traquair, op. cit., p. 2.
37. See Edward Robert Adair "The Church of l'Enfant Jésus, Pointe-aux-Trembles", BRH, 42, no. 7, juillet 1936, pp. 411-421.
38. Ramsay Traquair, "The Church of Ste-Jeanne-de-Chantal on the Ile Perrot, Quebec", JRAIC, 9, no. 5, May 1932, pp. 124-131 and no. 6, June 1932, pp. 147-152.
39. Edward Robert Adair, "The Church of Saint-Michel de Vaudreuil", BRH, 49, no. 2, février 1943, pp. 38-49 and no. 3, mars 1943, pp. 75-89.
40. Ramsay Traquair and Edward Robert Adair, "The Church of the Visitation - Sault-au-Récollet, Quebec", JRAIC, 4, no. 12, December 1927, pp. 437-451.
41. Michel Lessard et Huguette Marquis, "La maison québécoise, une maison qui se souvient", Forces, no. 17, 1971, pp. 12ss.
42. Census of Canada (1665-1871), pp. 2ss.

43. Gustave Lanctôt, L'administration de la Nouvelle-France; l'administration générale, pp. 145ss. Translation: "ruled in fact and totally" -- "What part does the population take in such an administrative system?" -- "None whatsoever..."
44. Id., "Le régime municipal en Nouvelle-France", Culture, 9, no. 3, septembre 1948, p. 283. Translation: "from this survey of municipal government in the days of New France, one may conclude that towns were administred by authorities devoid of any popular representation. (...) To sum up, according to the concept and the methods of the time, the administration, which was both benevolent and paternalistic, established a moral and a material order which encompassed the following facets of life: proper behaviour, security, hygiene, road maintenance, fire protection and even the cost of living. This order left no room for personal initiative or collective cooperation which would have enabled the small towns to progress and to grow and allowed the citizens to develop their intellectual capacities. It would also have improved the quality of their work and would have fostered their ambitions. All such lanes of endeavours were closed to the city dwellers of Canada, even though they were open to those of metropolitan France".
45. Jean-Charles Falardeau, "The Changing Social Structure" in Essais sur le Québec contemporain, pp. 112ss.
46. Id., "The Role and Importance of the Church in French Canada" in French-Canadian Society, 1, Sociological Studies, pp. 342-357.
47. Lower, op. cit., p. 56.
48. Maurice Tremblay, "Orientations de la pensée sociale" in Essais sur le Québec contemporain, pp. 195ss.
49. Jean-Charles Falardeau, "The Changing Social Structures", p. 120.
50. Kathleen Jenkins, Montreal, Island City of the St. Lawrence, p. 397.

Chapter 4: The Frontier Town

1. SHM, Voyage de Kalm en Amérique, pp. 55-56.
2. (Etienne-Michel Faillon), Histoire de la colonie française en Canada, 3, pp. 375ss (#).
3. SHM, Les origines de Montréal, pp. 119-120.
4. Ibid., pp. 134-135.
5. Ibid., p. 120. Translation: "should the seignors require part of this lot to establish a town, they would be entitled to expropriate same

and replace it by a parcel of the same dimensions at the far end of the lot and would have to pay for cleared land in accordance with the estimates on the value of the land established by experts".

6. Ibid., p. 168. Translation: "to take on the edge of the common a lot 3 perches wide and 31 perches and 6 feet long..."
7. Faillon, op. cit., p. 377. Translation: "in memory of the brave major who died for his country".
8. See also on this subject the "Plan partiel du Vieux Montréal montrant les premières concessions dressé sur le plan terrier des seigneurs et sur le plan de Montréal en 1729, de Chaussegros de Léry, ingénieur du Roi, par Aristide Beaugrand-Champagne, architecte, avril 1942". Municipal Archives of Montreal.
9. Archives of the Seminary of Ville-Marie, January 12, 1675. Quoted in Faillon, op. cit., p. 378. Translation: "erect buildings destined to embellish and decorate their town and to facilitate trade among the inhabitants as well as with foreigners..."
10. John William Reys, The Making of Urban America; a History of City Planning in the United States, pp. 160ss (#).
11. Raoul Blanchard, L'ouest du Canada français, 1, Montréal et sa région, p. 222 (#). Translation: "the whole plan for the huge city issued from the Sulpician's drawings".
12. SHM, Les origines de Montréal, attached plans.
13. Gustave Lanctôt, Images et figures de Montréal sous la France, p. 53.
14. Lanctôt, op. cit.
15. Villemarie dans l'isle de Montréal (1684). 13 x 9½. Ministry of the Colonies, Depository of the Fortifications of the Colonies, no. 446. Translation: "sent by M. Denonville on November 13, 1685".
16. Voyages du Baron de Lahontan, 1, p. 30. Translation: "it is built after the model of St. Sulpice in Paris..."
17. Ibid. Translation: "the inhabitants with plenty of wheat, cattle, poultry, and dozens of other goods sold in the town..."
18. Faillon, op. cit., p. 245. Translation: "the convenience of private citizens, who had to buy the provisions necessary for life, and also for the convenience of the inhabitants of the country, who wished to sell their farm products or the products of their industry".
19. Lanctôt, op. cit., p. 59.
20. Census of Canada (1665-1871), p. 16.

21. Plan de la ville de Montréal levé en l'année 1704. Ministry of the Colonies, Depository of the Fortifications of the Colonies, no. 468. E.-Z. Massicotte attributes this plan to Levasseur de Néré: see his "Inventaire des cartes et plans de l'île et de la ville de Montréal"; BRH, 20, no. 2, février 1914, p. 35.
22. The census of 1706 mentions 2025 inhabitants for Montreal and its suburbs. See Census of Canada (1665-1871), p. 48.
23. Voyages du Baron de Lahontan, 1, p. 30.
24. Lanctôt, op. cit., pp. 59-60.
25. E.-Z. Massicotte, Répertoire des arrêts, édits, mandements, ordonnances et règlements conservés dans les archives du Palais de justice de Montréal 1640-1760, p. 39. Hereafter: Répertoire des arrêts.
26. SHM, Annales de l'Hôtel-Dieu de Montréal rédigées par la soeur Morin, pp. 25-26. Translation: "there is presently a kind of town surrounded with stakes of cedar, five or six feet (French) high, bound together with heavy nails and wooden pegs, and this for the past ten years. This is how towns in Canada are surrounded; there are several large gates which are used as entrances and exits and are closed every evening by army officers maintained there by the king for our defense, should our enemy wish to worry us; they open both gates in the morning at regular hours, etc."
27. Répertoire des arrêts, p. 58. Translation: "for the embellishment and convenience of the public".
28. Lanctôt, op. cit. p. 60. Translation by the author.
29. Plan de la ville de Montréal en Canada, from drawings by Mr de Catalogne, engraving by Moullart Sanson, Paris, 1723.
30. Plan de la ville de Montréal en Canada Nouvelle France dans l'Amérique Septentrionale, Fait à Québec ce 20 Octobre 1724 par Chausségros de Léry, Echelle de 400 toises, avec Renvoy.
31. Plan de la ville de Montréal dans la Nouvelle-France, 1731, avec Renvoy.
32. Estimate according to the census of 1739 which mentions 4210 inhabitants for Montreal and its suburbs. See Census of Canada (1665-1871), p. 60.
33. Pierre-François-Xavier de Charlevoix, Histoire et description générale de la Nouvelle-France..., 3, p. 138. Translation: "mean redoubt on a hillock".
34. Ibid. Translation: "is also the district of all merchants".

35. Répertoire des arrêts, p. 88.
36. Edward Robert Adair, "The Evolution of Montreal under the French Regime", CHAR, Toronto, 1942, pp. 38-39.
37. Ibid., pp. 35-36.
38. Pierre Lavedan, Les villes françaises, p. 99 (#).
39. Abbé Auguste Gosselin, "Le "Traité de Fortifications" de Chaussegros de Léry", BRH, 7, no. 5, mai 1901, pp. 157-158. Translation: "all that pertains to the manner of fortifying places, of attacking and defending them".
40. Montreal would surrender to the British without a fight in 1760, and to the American rebels in 1775.
41. Lanctôt, op. cit. pp. 61-62.
42. Charles P. De Volpi and P. S. Winkworth, eds., Montreal: a Pictorial Record, 1, plate 5.
43. Ibid., plates 6 and 4.
44. Montreal in 1761, according to Paul Labrosse. Plan published, with additions by E.-Z. Massicotte, in SHM, Les origines de Montréal.
45. Census of Canada (1665-1871), pp. 64-68.
46. Robert E. Dickinson, The West European City; a Geographical Interpretation, p. 318.
47. Répertoire des arrêts, pp. 108-110 and 130.
48. Charlevoix, op. cit., p. 139. Translation: "which looks more like a cathedral than that of Quebec".
49. Lewis Mumford, Sticks and Stones; a Study of American Architecture and Civilization, p. 1 (#).
50. See: Emrys Jones, Towns and Cities, pp. 45-46 (#) and Arthur E. Smailes, The Geography of Towns, pp. 20-23 (#).
51. Charlevoix, op. cit., p. 139. Translation: "one was constantly reminded that it was the seignorial house".
52. Reps, op. cit., p. 29.
53. Jacques Mathieu, "Dollier de Casson, François" in Dictionnaire biographique du Canada, 2, 198-203; Olivier Maurault, "Un seigneur de Montréal: Dollier de Casson" in Marges d'histoire, 2, Montréal, pp. 33-51.

54. Reps, op. cit., pp. 2-4.
55. Lavedan, op. cit., pp. 73-88; Dickinson, op. cit., pp. 353-359.
56. Reps, op. cit., pp. 71-73.
57. In a residence which was probably located at the north-west corner of the present St-Paul and St-Sulpice streets.
58. Lavedan, op. cit., pp. 87-88.
59. Reps, op. cit., pp. 29-32.

Chapter 5: Architecture and Environment in the Frontier Town

1. Gérard Morisset, Coup d'oeil sur les arts en Nouvelle-France, p. ix (#).
2. E.-Z. Massicotte, "Coinç historiques du Montréal d'autrefois" in Les cahiers des dix, 2, pp. 152-155.
3. Olivier Maurault, "Notre-Dame de Montréal", RTC, 11e année, no. 42, juin 1925, pp. 123ss.
4. "L'histoire de notre château", CANJ, 1, no. 1-4, 1930, p. 48.
Translation: "house shall be sixty feet long on the outside as well as 36 feet wide".
5. Old measure of length equivalent to approximatively 33 centimetres. The actual Anglo-Saxon measure of length for the foot is equivalent to 30.47 centimetres.
6. "L'histoire de notre château", CANJ, p. 76. Translation: "the restoration and enlargement of the Company's mansion situated in town, on Notre-Dame Street, to 92 feet in length by 48 feet in width".
7. This enlargement of the château is confirmed by Victor Morin: see "Les Ramezay et leur château" in Les cahiers des dix, 3, p. 12.
8. Ramsay Traquair, The Old Architecture of Quebec, p. 51.
9. Pierre-Georges Roy, Les vieilles églises de la province de Québec, 1647-1800, pp. 25-31.
10. Traquair, op. cit., p. 91.
11. (Etienne-Michel Faillon), Histoire de la colonie française en Canada, 3, pp. 378ss. This church is the third parish church of Montreal. The first one was the chapel of the fort of Ville-Marie in 1642, replaced in 1656 by a second one built on St-Paul Street, near the Hôtel-Dieu.

12. Pierre-François-Xavier de Charlevoix, Histoire et description générale de la Nouvelle France..., 3, p. 139. Translation by the author.
13. This church of the monastery of the Récollets was pulled down in 1867.
14. Alan Gowans, Church Architecture in New France, pp. 63-64 and 76-80 (#).
15. On the east side, the view shows a wing of the new building which was to replace it and to which it is awkwardly attached; the project was later abandoned in favor of a new seminary to be built on Sherbrooke Street.
16. Olivier Maurault, "Notre-Dame de Montréal", pp. 117-141.
17. Alan Gowans, Building Canada; an Architectural History of Canadian Life, pp. 25-26.
18. Robert-Lionel Séguin, La civilisation traditionnelle de l'"habitant" aux 17^e et 18^e siècles; fonds matériel, p. 308. Translation: "...the Montreal house has the appearance of a small square domestic fortress; it is massive, flanked by heavy chimneys and built with large field stones drowned in mortar. The windows in the walls are recessed behind heavy shutters reinforced with iron... Such a house seems to find its origin in Brittany".
19. Traquair, op. cit., pp. 38ss.
20. Michel Lessard and Huguette Marquis, Encyclopédie de la maison québécoise, pp. 250-310 (#).
21. Raymond Tanghe, Géographie humaine de Montréal, pp. 234-235 (#).
22. France. Lois, statuts...Edits, ordonnances royaux, déclarations et arrêts du Conseil d'Etat du roi concernant le Canada, 2, pp. 292-294. Hereafter: Edits, ordonnances royaux. Translation: "Ordinance ruling on the reconstruction of houses in fireproof materials and on other purposes; the 8th July seventeen hundred and twenty one".
23. SHM, Voyage de Kalm en Amérique, p. 55. Translation: "ruling on the building of houses, in fireproof materials, in the towns of the Colony; June 7, 1727" - "to build a house in towns and large villages where stone is easily found, except in stone; we forbid (anyone) to build them in wood, piecemeal and with studwork..."
24. Edward Allen Talbot, Cinq années de séjour au Canada, 1, pp. 45-46. Translation: "cellars and store-rooms be as vaulted as possible, to prevent beams and floors which are placed above from rotting..." - "the stairs from the outside to the inside of the house, in order that no more than three steps at the most should protrude either in height or towards the street" - "Streets are usually very narrow, and added to this inconvenience, the sidewalks have been rendered almost impassible by a practice which is prevalent throughout the town; it consists of building outside the doors, wooden steps which extend two or three feet into the street. If only two persons meet

near one of these cumbersome contrivances, they are forced to step back, or, should they, out of courtesy, step down into the middle of the street, they find themselves up to their knees in snow or up to their ankles in mud".

25. According to Mr. Robert Hamilton Hubbard, this was simply a form of cultural heritage: see "The European Backgrounds of Early Canadian Art", Art Quarterly, XXVII, no. 3, 1964, pp. 297-323. According to him, this type of house is frequently found in the rural regions of Northern France. However, it is rather surprising that this very type of house was seldom encountered in Brittany, which seems to have been the country of origin of our domestic architecture.
Translation: "to include into the construction of outside walls and gables of houses any apparent wood..." - "to cover with shingles any house presently built in towns and suburbs" - "curb-roofs *"à la mansarde..."* which burden the buildings with forests of wood" - "to lay or rest any chimney or stove pipe on partitions, wooden partitions or studwork..." - "to build on the floors of attics and garrets a pugging or layer of lime and sand, at least two inches thick, so that when the upper floor is protected from fire, it would be easier to dismantle and cast down the roof of these same houses, should fire start in the house or in the neighbourhood of such houses." - "partition walls which extend beyond the roofs and divide them into several sections, or separate them from neighbouring houses, so that fire is less likely to spread from one to the other..."
26. Concerning this ordinance of June 7, 1727, see Edits, ordonnances royales, 2, pp. 314-321. Translation: "one must consider the proper plan and embellishment of the town as much as the durability of its buildings..." - "no new building should be located... unless the owner of the house to be built or to be rebuilt has aligned it on the lot itself and has accordingly written to the Sieur de Bécancourt, chief road surveyor of Canada..." - "under penalty of a fine for the master masons and contractors and at the risk of the owners being ordered to demolish their houses at their own expense..." - "no building should overhang on the street, or encroach on public squares, whether it is the main building or the stairs, which should both be properly aligned; that no house should be built too close to gates of the town, the ramparts, the batteries in public places and other places reserved for the defence and embellishment of the towns; that squares and streets should be wide enough and sufficiently sloped to permit the drainage of water, and to satisfy the needs for convenience, safety and public health." - "We order, to ensure just compensation and provide the seigneurs with adequate indemnity, that those who have lost part of their land for having conformed to the prescribed alignments, should be exempted from payment of the taxes and rents owed to the seigneurs in proportion to the amount of land lost; those whose lands have been extended by the realignment will have to pay the taxes and rents to the seigneur in proportion to the additional land they have acquired..."
27. Gérard Morisset, L'architecture en Nouvelle-France, p. 26 (#). Translation: "chimneys which are like spurs at each end of the building

and contain as many outlets as there are room to heat".

28. Ibid., p. 28.
29. E.Z. Massicotte, "Maçons, entrepreneurs, architectes", BRH, XXXV, no. 3, mars 1929, p. 132. Translation: "a master-mason was equally versed in the theory and the practice of the art of building; in those days, thought and hand were inseparable".
30. "L'histoire de notre château", CANJ, p. 49. Translation: "master-mason and architect".
31. Ibid., p. 76.
32. E.-Z. Massicotte, "Mémento historique de Montréal, 1636-1760", MSRC, Section I, XXVII, série III, mai 1933, pp. 128ss.
33. Born in Paris, date unknown, and died in Montreal in 1743: see Morisset, L'architecture en Nouvelle-France, p. 133.
34. Probably born in Quebec city in 1701, died in this city in 1762. Ibid.
35. Massicotte, "Mémento historique de Montréal, 1636-1760", pp. 128ss. Translation: "author of plans for houses".
36. Victor Morin, La légende dorée de Montréal, pp. 86-88.
37. Edits, ordonnances royaux, 2, p. 260. Translation: "any inhabitant, whatever his quality or condition, to throw refuse, soil or manure on to the streets..." and "... not to keep any pigs in his house ... or to allow any horned cattle to wander into the streets..."
38. Répertoire des arrêts, p. 107. Translation: "all the inhabitants of Montreal, whether landlords or tenants, to collect in front of their lot all manure, dirt or refuse lying there every day and to pile them up on the side of the street, so as not to be in the way of carriages..."
39. Edits, ordonnances royaux, 2, p. 137. Translation: "build latrines and privies to prevent infection and stench from dung left on the streets..."
40. J. H. Plumb, England in the Eighteenth Century, p. 12.
41. Edits, ordonnances royaux, 2, p. 258. Translation: "When I arrived in this town, I became aware of the untidiness in all the streets: they were almost impassable in any season, not only for pedestrians but even for carriages and carts because of the quagmires in their midst, caused as much by the nature and unevenness of the terrain as by the refuse thrown daily by the inhabitants..."
42. Joseph Hadfield, An Englishman in America, 1785..., p. 46.

43. Répertoire des arrêts, p. 107. Translation: "every landlord in Montreal to cut or cause to be cut all the wood necessary to build passages in front of the houses so that pedestrians might safely walk on them when there is ice".
44. J.H. Plumb, op. cit., p. 12.
45. M. Dorothy George, England in Transition; Life and Work in the Eighteenth Century, p. 71.
46. SHM, Voyage de Kalm en Amérique, p. 55. Translation by the author.
47. Ibid., pp. 55-56.

Chapter 6: Years of Transition

1. Quoted in Henry Stern Churchill, The City is the People, p. 108 (#).
2. Edouard-Charles-Victorien Colbert, comte de Maulevrier, Voyage dans l'intérieur des Etats-Unis et au Canada, pp. 58-59. Translation: "Three roads running parallel to the river, about one mile long each, crossed at right angles or almost, by about ten streets, constitute the town which is partly surrounded by an old wall..."
3. Isaac Weld, Travels through the States of North America, and the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada During the Years 1795, 1796, and 1797, p. 181.
4. Donald Creighton, The Empire of the St. Lawrence, p. 24.
5. Creighton, op. cit., p. 24.
6. Alexander Henry, Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories, between the Years 1760 and 1776, p. 2.
7. Désiré Girouard, Lake St. Louis, Old and New, p. 222.
8. Census of Canada (1665-1871), pp. 86ss and 118ss.
9. See Edgar Andrew Collar, Oldest McGill.
10. John Summerson, Georgian London, p. 133.
11. Alan Gowans, Building Canada: an Architectural History of Canadian Life, pp. 72ss (#).
12. Olivier W. Larkin, L'art et la vie en Amérique, pp. 41-42 (#).
13. Lewis Mumford, Sticks and Stones; a Study of American Architecture and Civilization, p. 23 (#).

14. Ibid., pp. 26ss.
15. Eric McLean, "The Papineau House", Habitat, 7, no. 5, September-October 1964, pp. 2-7.
16. Olivier Maurault, "Un professeur d'architecture à Québec en 1828", JRAIC, 3, no. 1, January-February 1926, pp. 32-36.
17. Ramsay Traquair, The Old Architecture of Quebec, pp. 287-289; Gowans, op. cit., pp. 59-63.
18. Journal de la Chambre d'Assemblée du Bas-Canada, from the 28th of March to the 3rd of June, inclusive, in the thirty ninth year of the Reign of His Majesty George III, (1799), pp. 187-191.
Translation: "necessary and in the public interest that subdivisions be established according to a regular plan, that a necessary and sufficient number of streets be opened and that public squares be retained for future needs..." and "from the day the plans are approved, no owner of the afore mentioned land shall be entitled to sell or subdivide same, to build upon it or to fence in any orchard or garden except in conformity with the said plan and respecting the location of streets and public squares as designed and drawn on the plan..."
19. Journal de la Chambre d'Assemblée du Bas-Canada, from the 8th of January to the 8th of April, inclusive, in the forty-first year of the Reign of His Majesty George III, (1801), pp. 321ss.
Translation: "an Act to tear down the old walls and fortifications surrounding the city of Montreal and to otherwise provide for the salubrity, convenience and embellishment of the city".
20. Albertine Ferland Angers, La citadelle de Montréal, 1658-1820, p. 508.
21. N.E. Dionne, "Joseph Bouchette", BRH, XX, no. 7, Juillet 1914, pp. 226-230.
22. Joseph Bouchette, Description topographique de la province du Bas-Canada..., p. 157. Translation: "When the Act (to remove the old walls and fortifications of the town) promulgated by the Provincial Parliament in 1801 is executed according to the plans, no colony of England except India, will be able to boast of a city as beautiful, as regular, as extended or as convenient as this one".
23. Ibid., pp. 157ss.
24. Comte de Maulevrier, op. cit., p. 59. Translation: "behind the city's walls, to the north, runs a muddy creek which should be changed into a canal: it would benefit the salubrity of the place instead of harming it as it does now".
25. E.-Z. Massicotte, "Quelques rues et faubourgs du vieux Montréal" in Les cahiers des dix, 1, pp. 130ss.
26. Ibid. pp. 110ss; Angers, op. cit., pp. 508ss.

27. John M. Duncan, Travels through Part of the United States and Canada in 1818 and 1819, 2, pp. 152-153.
28. Olivier Maurault, La Paroisse; histoire de l'église Notre-Dame de Montréal, p. 104.
29. Duncan, op. cit., p. 153.
30. Raoul Blanchard, L'ouest du Canada français, 1, Montréal et sa région, pp. 229-231.
31. Alfred Sandham, Ville-Marie, or, Sketches of Montreal, Past and Present, pp. 80-81 (#).
32. For an inventory of this progress, see William Henry Atherton, Montreal, 2, pp. 397ss and 413ss (#).
33. George Heriot, Travels through the Canadas..., p. 114.
34. John Lambert, Travels through Lower Canada, and the United States of North America, in the Years 1806, 1807 and 1808, 2, p. 64.
35. Sir James Edward Alexander, Transatlantic Sketches..., 2, p. 191.
36. Duncan, op. cit. p. 150.
37. Adam Fergusson, Practical Notes Made during a Tour in Canada..., p. 64.
38. Weld, op. cit., p. 178.
39. Edward Allen Talbot, Cinq années de séjour au Canada, 1, p. 47.
Holidays?
 Translation: "It is impossible to wander in the streets of Montreal on a Sunday or on a festive day, when all the shops are closed, without being most sadly impressed. The whole city is like a huge prison and every time a sound reaches the stranger's ears, it sounds like the rattle made by the chains of some scoundrel or the pitiful wail of a poor debtor rotting in jail".
40. Théodore Pavie, Souvenirs atlantiques: voyage aux Etats-Unis et au Canada, 1, p. 157. Translation: "The houses are all made of gray stone so that the long narrow streets look very dark. What first strikes the stranger's eyes is the white colour of the roofs which are covered with tin while the shutters are lined with sheet iron, as a protection against fire. This method of building conveys an impression of great monotony."
41. Bouchette, op. cit., p. 142. Translation by the author.
42. Benjamin Silliman, Remarks Made on a Short Tour between Hartford and Quebec, in the Autumn of 1819, p. 358.
43. Ibid., p. 359.

44. Alexander, op. cit., p. 192.
45. (Rev. Newton) Bosworth ed., Hochelaga Depicta; the Early History and Present State of the City and Island of Montreal, p. 91.
46. Bouchette, op. cit., p. 143.
47. Lambert, op. cit., 2, p. 68.
48. Pavie, op. cit., 1, p. 160. Translation: "one of the loveliest places".
49. Hadfield, op. cit., p. 46.
50. Weld, op. cit., p. 178.
51. E.-Z. Massicotte, "Montréal se transforme" in Les cahiers des dix, 5, p. 207.
52. Ibid., pp. 207-210.
53. Duncan, op. cit., p. 153.
54. Lambert, op. cit., 2, p. 70.
Bouchette, op. cit., p. 150.
Silliman, op. cit., p. 367.
Fergusson, op. cit., p. 66.
Sir Richard Henry Bonnycastle, The Canadas in 1841, 1, p. 75.
55. James Silk Buckingham, Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and the other British Provinces in North America..., p. 129.
56. Talbot, op. cit., 1, p. 53. Translation: "the most beautiful building, whether private or public".
57. Merrill Denison, Canada's First Bank; a History of the Bank of Montreal, pp. 115ss.
58. Gérard Morisset, L'architecture en Nouvelle-France, p. 136 (#).
John Bland, "Deux architectes au 19ième siècle -- Two 19th Century Architects", ABC, 8, no. 87, juillet 1953, p. 20.
59. Frank Dawson Adams, A History of Christ Church Cathedral, pp. 56ss.
60. Silliman, op. cit., p. 369.
61. Talbot, op. cit., p. 51. Translation: "which is admittedly far superior to anything of the kind one may see in British North America".
62. Bouchette, op. cit., p. 149.
63. Plan of 120 feet long by 80 feet wide, with extension 12 feet deep by 40 feet wide.

64. Peter Kidson, Peter Murray and Paul Thompson, A History of English Architecture, p. 193 (#)
65. Franklin K.B. Toker, The Church of Notre-Dame in Montreal; an Architectural History, pp. 29ss and 38ss.
66. Pavie, op. cit., 1, p. 159. Translation: "large and beautiful monument".
67. E.T. Coke, A Subaltern's Furlough... pp. 334-335.
68. Hugh Murray, An Historical and Descriptive Account of British America..., 1, pp. 260-261.
69. Maurault, La Paroisse, pp. 99-100.
70. Quoted in Maurault, La Paroisse, p. 95. Translation: "Gentlemen... you should keep in mind that you are not erecting a temporary building but rather a monument that will bring glory to yourselves, to your assembly and to your country. I can assure you that the story of your church will be passed on to generations of the future..."
71. See Ibid., passim and Franklin B. Toker, "James O'Donnell; an Irish Georgian in America", JSAH, XXIX, no. 2, May 1970, pp. 132-143.
72. Toker, The Church of Notre-Dame in Montreal, pp. 83-86.
73. Quoted in Maurault, La Paroisse, p. 58. Translation: "Alas, there are so very few people here to appreciate the work of an architect..."
74. Toker, The Church of Notre-Dame in Montreal, pp. 29ss.
75. Alexander, op. cit., p. 192.
76. Toker, The Church of Notre-Dame in Montreal, p. 84.
77. Quoted in Maurault, La Paroisse, p. 72. Translation: "Since your building is to be in the gothic style, and since I have only studied Greek and Roman architecture, which I thought was sufficient for this country, my knowledge of the gothic is only superficial. I therefore believe I would be unequal to such a task".
78. Ibid., p. 90.

Chapter 7: New Forces

1. H. de Lamothe, Cinq mois chez les Français d'Amérique..., pp. 78-79.
2. Henry Stern Churchill, The City Is the People, p. 6.

3. See Joseph Arthur Lower, Canada; an Outline History, pp. 88-89 (#).
4. John Lambert, Travels through Lower Canada, and the United States of North America, in the Years 1806, 1807 and 1808, 2, pp. 64-65.
5. See Raoul Blanchard, L'ouest du Canada français, 1, Montréal et sa région, pp. 247-251 and 278-280 (#); Benoît Brouillette, "Le port et les transports" in Montréal économique, pp. 115-182.
6. See Blanchard, op. cit., pp. 251-252 and 276-278; Brouillette, op. cit.
7. Blanchard, op. cit., pp. 268-276.
8. Leroy O. Stone, Urban Development in Canada; an Introduction to Demographic Aspects, p. 29.
9. Jean de Laplante, "La communauté montréalaise", CESH, 1, 1952, pp. 95ss.
10. John Irwin Cooper, Montreal, a Brief History, pp. 18-19 (#).
11. Id., "The Social Structure of Montreal in the 1850s" in CHAR, 1956, pp. 64-65.
12. Census of Canada (1665-1871), pp. 202-207.
13. Cooper, Montreal, a Brief History, pp. 94-95.
14. Blanchard, op. cit., pp. 228-233 and 281-288.
15. Cooper, Montreal, a Brief History, p. 92.
16. Id., "The Social Structure of Montreal in the 1850s", p. 69.
17. See Albert Faucher and Maurice Lamontagne, "History of Industrial Development" in Essais sur le Québec contemporain, pp. 23-37.
18. Blanchard, op. cit., pp. 271-276; Jean Delage, "L'industrie manufacturière" in Montréal économique, pp. 183-241.
19. Asa Briggs, Victorian Cities, p. 64.
20. Gabrielle Roy, Bonheur d'occasion, p. 33. Translation: "Here, luxury and poverty tirelessly gape at one another, ever since there was a Westmount and ever since at the foot of the hill lay Saint-Henri".
21. Harper's New Monthly Magazine, June 1889; article reproduced in part in Edgar Andrew Collard, Call Back Yesterdays, pp. 202-208.
22. George Monro Grant, ed., Picturesque Canada. The Country as it Was and Is, 1, p. 112.
23. Canada, Census 1870-71, 1, pp. 38-39; Blanchard, op. cit., pp. 275ss.

24. Canada, Census 1880-81, 1, pp. 52-53; Fourth Census 1901, 1, pp. 104-105.
25. Robert Furneaux Jordan, Victorian Architecture, p. 18.
26. Herbert Brown Ames, "The City below the Hill". A Sociological Study of a Portion of the City of Montreal, Canada, pp. 41-47.
27. Roy, op. cit., p. 28. Translation: "This is where the early boundaries of the suburb lay; there, the last houses of St. Henri stood facing vacant fields and their small gardens thrived on country air. Of these good old days, St-Ambroise street has managed to save but two or three tall trees rising from the sidewalks. Textile mills, grain elevators, and stockyards have risen in front of the wooden houses stealing their fresh air and green spaces, engulfing them slowly, solidly."
28. Blanchard, op. cit., p. 292.
29. Ibid., p. 276. A large section of the municipality of Hochelaga was annexed to Montreal in 1883, and the remaining part was named Maisonneuve.
30. Ibid., pp. 288-296; Canada, Census 1870-71, 1, pp. 38-39; Fifth Census 1911, 1, p. 110. Paul Gauthier, "Montréal et ses quartiers municipaux", BRH, 67, no. 4. octobre, novembre, décembre 1961, pp. 115-135.
31. Cooper, Montreal, a Brief History, pp. 104-106.
32. Electric light is first introduced in 1879.
33. Canada, Fifth Census 1911, 1, pp. 103-108. The construction in 1886 of the C.P.R. bridge on the St. Lawrence River marked the beginning of the modern Lachine.
34. Laplante, op. cit., pp. 85-86.
35. Ibid., p. 90.
36. Blanchard, op. cit., pp. 294-296.
37. Cooper, "The Social Structure of Montreal in the 1850s", pp. 72-73.
38. Edgar Andrew Collard, Call Back Yesterdays, p. 207 (#).
39. Ibid., p. 176.
40. Arthur R.M. Lower, Canadians in the Making; a Social History of Canada, pp. 212-225.
41. Murray Ballantyne, "J'ai grandi au Canada français" in Le Canada français aujourd'hui et demain, pp. 56-57. Translation by the author.
42. Lower, Canadians in the Making, p. 247.

43. Grant, op. cit., pp. 113-114.

Chapter 8: Somewhere Between Good and Mediocre:
Public and Religious Architecture

1. Alan Gowans, Building Canada: an Architectural History of Canadian Life, p. xix (#).
2. Robert Furneaux Jordan, Victorian Architecture, p. 19.
3. Jonh Bland, "Effects of Nineteenth Century Manners on Montreal", JRAIC, 33, no. 11, November 1956, p. 417.
4. Following the fire which, in 1849, burnt down the Parliament of the Union on Place d'Youville.
5. Due to the difference in level of its site, the Market has two storeys on St-Paul Street, three storeys on des Commissaires Street.
6. See Maréchal Nantel, "Le palais de Justice de Montréal et ses abords" in Les cahiers des dix, 12, pp. 197-230.
7. Bland, op. cit., p. 416.
8. Ibid.
9. Percy E. Nobbs, "Architecture in the Province of Quebec during the Early Years of the 20th Century", JRAIC, 33, no. 11, November 1956, p. 418.
10. Today, College Ste-Marie as designed by Fr. Martin is hardly recognizable. One storey was added in 1892; the dôme was torn down in 1913; the peristyle which was to decorate the façade on Dorchester Blvd was never constructed and the façade on Bleury St. was entirely transformed. Lastly, the site itself was transformed by raising the ground on the side of Dorchester Blvd. The other buildings attributed to Fr. Martin, Caughnawaga Church (1842) and the central part of the Jesuits' noviciate at Sault-au-Récollet, show that he was better builder than he was architect.
11. Ibid., pp. 180ss.
12. "L'architecture en Canada", La Minerve, 28 avril 1866. Concerning St-Patrick's, refer to Robert Liscombe, The Story of Old St-Patrick and Robert Hamilton Hubbard, "Canadian Gothic", Architectural Review, 116, no. 8, August 1954, pp. 102-108.
13. See Kenneth Clark, The Gothic Revival; an Essay in the History of Taste, especially chapter 8, pp. 134-158.

14. Hubbard, op. cit., p. 107.
15. Philip J. Turner, "Christ Church Cathedral, Montreal", Construction, XX, no. 11, November 1927, pp. 347-354; Franklin Morris, "Christ Church Cathedral, Montreal", Dalhousie Review, 35, Summer 1955, pp. 176, 178.
16. Baron Etienne Hulot, De l'Atlantique au Pacifique à travers le Canada et le Nord des Etats-Unis, p. 158. Translation: "the shimmering silvery roofs rise the towers of Notre-Dame, St. Peter's dome, and the steeples of about thirty churches, all of them more or less Gothic in style".
17. As a replacement to the previous church built in 1834 from plans by John Wells.
18. Desjardins, op. cit., 2, p. 127. Translation: "the beautiful style of St-Louis, the Sainte Chapelle, Amiens Cathedral and especially the cathedral of Koln..." - "in pure twelfth century Gothic"
19. Ibid., pp. 136-152.
20. Ibid., p. 127. Translation: "up to the bishop alone to set the plan and the dimensions of churches to be built in his diocese" - "under the sole authority of the Pope..."
21. This palace was destroyed by the great fire of July 9, 1852.
22. Olivier Maurault, Marges d'histoire, 2, Montréal, pp. 247ss. The campanile was built in 1926 by architect J.-O. Marchand.
23. Maurault, op. cit., pp. 269-291; Cowans, op. cit., pp. 109-111.
24. In that sense, other "neo" styles could have been identified, such as the neo-Romanesque (Grey Nuns' Covent, Dorchester Blvd), the neo-Byzantine (Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes chapel, Ste-Catherine Street) and others. These styles are obviously not as widespread as the ones cited here.
25. Location of the following buildings:
 Post Office: north-east corner of St. James St. and St-François-Xavier St.
 Demolished.
 Banque des Marchands: north-west corner of St. James St. and St-Pierre St.
 Many storeys have been added.
 Molson Bank: south-east corner of St. James St. and St-Pierre St.
 Dominion Block: north-west corner of McGill St. and St-Paul St.
26. Henry-Russel Hitchcock, Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, p. 132 (#).
27. Bland, op. cit., p. 416.

28. See The Windsor Hotel Guide to the City of Montreal and for the Dominion of Canada.
29. What is left today of Windsor Hotel is a later extension of the original building.
30. Hitchcock, op. cit., p. 144.
31. Gowans, op. cit., pp. 122-123.
32. Philip J. Turner, "The Development of Architecture in the Province of Quebec since Confederation", Construction, 20, no. 6, June 1927, pp. 193-194.
33. "Bibliothèque Saint-Sulpice, Montréal. Eugène Payette, architecte." (Portfolio of current architecture), The Architectural Record, XLI, no. 4, April 1917, pp. 341-348; Thomas W. Ludlow, "The Montreal Art Gallery; E. & W.S. Maxwell, architects", The Architectural Record, XXXVII, no. 2, February 1915, pp. 132-148.
34. Turner, "The Development of Architecture in the Province of Quebec since Confederation", p. 194.
35. See the fire station of the old municipality of Maisonneuve, on Notre-Dame St., built by Marius Dufresne in 1915.
36. Hitchcock, op. cit., pp. 226-227.
37. Turner, "The Development of Architecture..."; p. 192.
38. Hitchcock, op. cit., p. 206.
39. Turner, "The Development of Architecture...", p. 193.
40. The present tower of Château Frontenac was added in 1923 by architects E. & W.S. Maxwell.
41. See Allen Scribner, ed., Dictionary of American Biography, 15, pp. 210-211.
42. Erskine and American United Church, Sherbrooke St., at the north-east corner of Ontario Avenue, built in 1893, is another example of architecture inspired by the style of Richardson. The interior of this church has been considerably transformed in 1938 by architects Nobbs and Hyde.
43. Edgar Andrew Collard, Call Back Yesterdays, p. 200 (#).

Chapter 9: Hopes and Disappointments: Commercial Architecture

1. Sigfried Giedion, Space, Time and Architecture; the Growth of a New Tradition, pp. 100-101.
2. Melvin Charney, "The Old Montreal no One Wants to Preserve", The Montrealer, 38, no. 12, December 1964, p. 22.
3. Henry-Russel Hitchcock, Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, p. 234; Winston Weisman, "Philadelphia Functionalism and Sullivan", JSAH, XX, no. 1, March 1961, p. 6.
4. Engravings reproduced in Charles De Volpi and P.S. Winkworth, eds., Montreal: a Pictorial Record, 2, plate 228. This building seems to have been since demolished.
5. These warehouses were built on the site of the old Hôtel-Dieu of Jeanne Mance.
6. This architectural texture will develop in the first expression of the curtain wall as one can see in the style of the façade of the commercial building on 47-55 des Commissaires Street West.
7. Giedion, op. cit., pp. 134-138.
8. Hitchcock, op. cit., p. 237.
9. Alan Cowans maintains that, as a rule, the first Canadian buildings of this style were inspired by models in Great Britain whereas the last ones were inspired by models in the United States.
10. John Bland, "Effect of Nineteenth Century Manners on Montreal", JRAIC, 33, no. 11, November 1956, p. 416; Philip J. Turner, "The Development of Architecture in the Province of Quebec since Confederation", Construction, XX, No. 6, June 1927, p. 190.
11. Turner, op. cit., p. 193; Thomas Ritchie, Canada Builds 1867-1967, p. 73.
12. Turner, op. cit., p. 195.
13. The Aldred building is located on the north-east corner of Notre-Dame Street and Place d'Armes.
14. Montreal, Old (and) New, p. 351 (#).
15. Charney, op. cit., p. 22; Id., "The Grain Elevators Revisited", Architectural Design, XXXVII, July 1967, pp. 328-331.
16. Lionel Thomas Caswell Rolt, Victorian Engineering, p. 28.
17. Henry-Russel Hitchcock, Early Victorian Architecture in Britain, 1, pp. 518-521, 2, pp. 35-38; Rolt, op. cit., pp. 27-31.

18. H. de Lamothe, Cinq mois chez les Français d'Amérique, p. 74.
Translation: "We must admit that this masterpiece of engineering makes a deeper impression on the mind than on the eye, for the distance strangely dwarfs its gigantic proportions. Seen from a distance, the long, rigid line of the gallery, the slender and equally rectilinear arches give the bridge the humble appearance of a bridge on trestles".
19. Lewis Mumford, The Brown Decades; a Study of the Arts in America, 1865-1895, pp. 97ss (#).
20. Concerning Victoria bridge, see Charles Legge, A Glance at the Victoria Bridge and the Men Who Built It.

Chapter 10: From Extravagance to Indigence: Domestic Architecture

1. Melvin Charney, "Pour une définition de l'architecture au Québec" in Architecture et urbanisme au Québec, p. 23 (#).
2. See Stephen Leacock, Leacock's Montreal, pp. 233-235.
3. Today, Allan Memorial of the Royal Victoria Hospital.
4. John Bland, "Domestic Architecture in Montreal", Culture, 9, no. 4, décembre 1948, p. 403.
5. Edgar Andrew Collard, "Of Many Things..." The Gazette, Montreal May 30, 1970, p. 6. Concerning John George Howard, see Marion MacRae and Anthony Adamson, The Ancestral Roof: Domestic Architecture of Upper-Canada, 1783-1867, pp. 87ss, 102, 202.
6. J. Russell Harper and Stanley Triggs, eds, Portrait of a Period; Collection of Notman Photographs, 1856-1915, photographs no. 72, 73 and 74.
7. John Bland, "Effect of Nineteenth Century Manners on Montreal", JRAIC, 33, no. 11, November 1956, p. 416; J. Philip Turner, "The Development of Architecture in the Province of Quebec since Confederation", pp. 189-195.
8. See the introduction of: Lewis Mumford, The Brown Decades; a Study of the Arts in America, 1865-1895 (#).
9. Edgar Andrew Collard, Call Back Yesterdays, p. 201 (#).
10. Mumford, op. cit., p. 110.
11. Hans Blumenfeld, "L'habitation dans les métropoles", ABC, 21, no. 241, Mai 1966, p. 23; Blake McKelvey, The Urbanisation of America, 1860-1915, pp. 76-77.

12. John Irwin Cooper, "The Social Structure of Montreal in the 1850s", CHAR, 1956, p. 68.
13. Roy Kervin, "Faubourg à la Melasse... Victim of Progress", The Montrealer, 38, no. 6, June 1964, pp. 16-19.
14. Raymond Tanghe, Géographie humaine de Montréal, pp. 244-245 (#); Stuart Wilson, "A Part of Le Faubourg", JRAIC, 43, no. 11, November 1966, pp. 71-74.
15. R.J. Mitchell and M.D.R. Leys, A History of London Life, p. 82.
16. Bland, "Domestic Architecture in Montreal", pp. 399-407.
17. Bland, op. cit., p. 405; Tanghe, op. cit., pp. 259ss.
18. Bland, op. cit., p. 405.
19. Marcel Parizeau, "L'urbanisme" in Montréal économique, pp. 377-397 passim; Raoul Blanchard, L'ouest du Canada-français, 1, Montréal et sa région, pp. 346-349 and 359-363.
20. Société des Ecrivains canadiens, éd. Ville, ô ma ville, p. 291. Translation: "those corridor-bedrooms extending along a ladder improperly called a staircase... those outside staircases history will never deny us..."
21. Canada, Census 1890-91, 1, 96-97; Sixth Census, 1921, 1, p. 220.
22. Abbé Norbert Lacoste, Les caractéristiques sociales de la population du grand Montréal, pp. 89ss.
23. Blumenfeld, op. cit., p. 23.
24. Note that this roof is a flat roof surmounted by another roof which is gently sloping towards the drain.

Chapter 11: The Victorian Legacy

1. Asa Briggs, Victorian Cities, pp. 16-17.
2. Lewis Mumford, The City in History: Its Origins, Its Transformations, and Its Prospects, especially chapter 15th: Palaeotechnic Paradise: Coketown, pp. 446-481 (#).
3. Quoted in Briggs, op. cit., p. 92.
4. Ibid., pp. 11-58.

5. Ibid., pp. 16-17.
6. William Henry Atherton, Montreal, 2, pp. 407ss and 671 (#).
7. John William Reps, The Making of Urban America..., pp. 296-299 (#).
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24. Robert Furneaux Jordan, Victorian Architecture, p. 168.
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26. Gy Julius Fabos, Gordon T. Milde and Michael V. Weinmayr, Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr; Founder of Landscape Architecture in America. Concerning Mount Royal Park, see A.L. Murray, "Frederick Law Olmsted and the Design of Mount Royal Park, Montreal", JSAH, XXVI, no. 3, october 1967, pp. 163-171.

27. Frederick Law Olmsted, Mount Royal, Montreal, p. 26.
28. Longstreth, op. cit., p. 218.
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33. Jules Bazin, "L'île Ste-Hélène et son histoire", Vie des Arts, no. 48, Automne 1967, pp. 18-23.
34. John Irwin Cooper, "The Social Structure of Montreal in the 1850s", CHAR, 1956, p. 73.

Chapter 12: The Metropolis

1. Michel Régner, Génération; poèmes, p. 94.
2. Montréal, Qué., Service d'urbanisme, Urbanisation. Etude de l'expansion urbaine dans la région de Montréal, p. 3.
3. Leroy O. Stone, Urban Development in Canada; an Introduction to Demographic Aspects, p. 29; Statistique Canada, Census 1971.
4. Montréal, Qué., Service d'urbanisme, Métropole, les Cahiers d'urbanisme, no. 1, pp. 5-9. Refer also to the Census of 1971. This Montreal region as defined by the City Planning Department includes Montreal, Laval, Perrot and Bizard islands, and the counties of Soulanges, Vaudreuil, Deux-Montagnes, Terrebonne (a part), Assomption, Verchères, St-Hyacinthe, Chambly, Rouville, Laprairie, St-Jean and Iberville, Napierville, Châteauguay and Beauharnois.
5. Ibid., pp. 17-23.
6. Urbanisation, pp. 4-6.
7. Hans Blumenfeld, The Modern Metropolis; Its Origins, Growth, Characteristics and Planning, pp. 61-76 (#).
8. Métropole, les Cahiers d'urbanisme, no. 1, p. 15.
9. "L'exode rural; Montréal attire 100 personnes par jour", Le Devoir, Monday, April 5, 1971, p. 3.

10. Benoît Brouillette, "Le port de Montréal, hier et aujourd'hui", RGM, 21, no. 2, 1967, pp. 195-233. Montreal harbour is no longer the second largest in America, but it is now surpassed by about ten ports in the United States.
11. Claude Mangazol, "L'industrie manufacturière à Montréal" in Montreal, Field Guide, pp. 125-135.
12. Peter Foggin, "Les formes de l'utilisation du sol à Montréal" in Montreal, Field Guide, pp. 36-37
13. Montréal, Qué., Service d'urbanisme, Centre ville de Montréal, pp. 5-6.
14. Montréal, Qué., Service d'urbanisme, Métropole, les Cahiers d'urbanisme, no. 2, pp. 6-13.
15. Centre ville, op. cit., p. 55.
16. Paul-Yves Denis, "Conditions géographiques et postulats démographiques d'une rénovation urbaine à Montréal", RGM, 21, no. 1, 1967, p. 154.
17. Hans Blumenfeld, "L'habitation dans les métropoles", ABC, 21, no. 241, mai 1966, p. 24.
18. Montréal, Qué., Service d'urbanisme, Familles et ménages 1951-1961, pp. 5-13.
19. Especially considering that the demand for small units is urgent in this sector owing to the presence of educational institutions (McGill University, etc.) and to the lure of this sector for the tourists.
20. Blumenfeld, "L'habitation dans les métropoles", p. 24.
21. Métropole, les Cahiers d'urbanisme no. 2, pp 20-23.
22. Ibid., p. 22.
23. Urbanisation, op. cit., p. 78.
24. Métropole, les Cahiers d'urbanisme, no. 1, p. 26.
25. Familles et ménages 1951-1961, pp. 10-13.
26. Ibid., p. 2.
27. The construction of Habitations Jeanne-Mance, near the city's centre, and the renovation of La Petite Bourgogne, in a traditional industrial ward, is the result of the following reasoning: to give adequate dwellings and a satisfactory environment to poor families unable to follow the definite settlement pattern of richer families.

28. Christopher Tunnard and Henry Hope Reed, American Skyline; the Growth and Form of our Cities and Towns, p. 178 (#)
29. John Irwin Cooper, Montreal, a Brief History, pp. 129-130 (#)
30. Paul Ritter, Planning for Man and Motor, pp. 271-272; development located on the south-east corner of Rosemont Boulevard and Viau Street.
31. Cyril Paumier, "New Town at Montreal's Front Door", Landscape Architecture, 57, no. 1, October 1966, p. 67.
32. Aimé Cousineau, "City Planning Activities in Montreal", JRAIC, 20, no. 4, April 1943, pp. 51-53.
33. See JRAIC, 22, no. 5, May 1945, pp. 89-107.
34. See Alain Coucharrière, "Montréal, horizon 2000", Commerce 71, avril 1969, pp. 62-66; mai 1969, pp. 26-31; "Horizon 2000, Montréal", ABC, 23, no. 263, avril 1968, pp. 32-38.
35. Harvey Cox, The Secular City; Secularization and Urbanization in Theological Perspective, pp. 31ss.
36. André Saumier, "La ville humaine", Habitat, X, no. 1, janvier-février, 1967, p. 15. Translation: "all the more structured and grand that it was more isolated from the real world of urban and industrial revolution".
37. See Urbanization, p. 68.

Chapter 13: The New Core of the City

1. Peter Blake, "Downtown in 3-D", The Architectural Forum, 125, no. 2, September 1966, p. 31.
2. Alan Gowans, Building Canada: an Architectural History of Canadian Life, Illustration 205 (#)
3. Blake, op. cit., p. 34; Guy Desbarats, "Montreal - laboratoire urbain", Habitat, X, no. 1, janvier-février, 1967, pp. 26-32.
4. Blake, op. cit., p. 47.
5. These lots are roughly bounded by Cathcart Street to the north, Mansfield and De l'Inspecteur Streets to the west, St-Antoine Street to the south and University Street to the east.
6. Commission industrielle de Montréal, "Les Termini de Montréal du Canadien National", Montréal, la Métropole du Canada, pp. 61-64.

7. "A Modern Station for Montreal", Architectural Record, 94, no. 12, December 1943, pp. 91-101.
8. "Place Ville Marie", The Architectural Forum, 118, no. 2, February 1963, pp. 74-89.
9. For an historical account of the development of these lots belonging to the C.N., see Jan C. Rowan, "The Story of Place Ville Marie", Progressive Architecture, XLI, no. 2, February 1960, pp. 123-135.
10. Jean Pelletier et Ludger Beauregard, "Le centre-ville de Montréal" RGM, 21, no. 1, 1967, p. 31.
11. Henri N. Cobb, "Some Notes on the Design of Place Ville Marie" JRAIC, 40, no. 2, February 1963, pp. 54-57.
12. "Place Ville Marie" The Architectural Forum, p. 83.
13. Arthur Byrd, "The Skyscraper", The Canadian Architect, 7, no. 6, June 1962, p. 46.
14. "C.I.L. House, Montreal", The Canadian Architect, 7, no. 6, June 1962, pp. 53-63.
15. Pelletier et Beauregard, op. cit., pp. 26-27.
16. "Downtown Bank Tower", Progressive Architecture, XLIV, no. 9, September 1963, pp. 140-145.
17. Boyd, op. cit., pp. 45-46.
18. Stuart Wilson, "Place Victoria", JRAIC, 42, no. 10, October 1965, p. 64.
19. Melvin Charney, "Place Victoria", The Canadian Architect, 10, no. 7, July 1965, pp. 37-54.
20. Steen Eiler Rasmussen, Experiencing Architecture, pp. 56-82 (#).
21. Ray T. Affleck, lecture at the School of Architecture of Montreal, October 9, 1969.
22. Ray T. Affleck, "Place Bonaventure: the Architect's View", Architecture Canada, 44, no. 7, July 1967, p. 32.
23. Ibid., p. 37. The exterior style of this building has been greatly influenced by the Yale Art and Architecture Building (New Haven) built by Paul Rudolph. This building was inaugurated in 1963.
24. Paul-Yves Denis, "Conditions géographiques et postulats démographiques d'une rénovation urbaine à Montréal", RGM, 21, no. 1, 1967, p. 164.

25. Desbarats, op. cit., pp. 26-32.
26. Percy Johnson-Marshall, Rebuilding Cities, pp. 126-129.
27. Blake, op. cit., p. 47.
28. Pelletier et Beauregard, op. cit., pp. 19-20. Translation: "of the most remarkable feats of adjustment to geography".
29. Affleck, op. cit., p. 36.
30. For criticism on this new pole of attraction in the city-centre, see Norbert Schoenauer, "Critique One", The Canadian Architect, 8, no. 2, February 1963, pp. 55-57; J. Lehrman, "Critique Two", The Canadian Architect, 8, no. 2, February 1963, pp. 63-64.
31. Robert Gretton and Norman Slater, "Metro", The Canadian Architect, 12, no. 2, February 1967, p. 27.
32. See Ludger Beauregard, "Le Transport en commun à Montréal" in Montreal, Field Guide, pp. 179-188.
33. Hans Blumenfeld, The Modern Metropolis; Its Origins, Growth, Characteristics and Planning, p. 152. The population is particularly well served in the city-centre where the eight metro stations are located in alternate positions on two parallel lines which are at a distance of about 2000 feet from one another. Thus, in this area of 600 acres, one has to walk fewer than 3 minutes to reach a metro station. Outside the city-centre, the distance between each station is about 2000 feet, instead of 1600 feet as in the city-centre.
34. These sites may be useful for commercial purposes as a great number of passengers go through each station daily.
35. Blumenfeld, op. cit., p. 149.
36. Under the direction of chief architect Gérard Masson and of the architect in charge of the metro, Mr. Pierre Bourgeau, the Public Works Department designed 10 stations. Private architects designed the other 16 stations.
37. Gretton and Slater, op. cit., p. 33.
38. Victor Prus, "Reflections on the Subterranean Architecture of Subway Systems", The Canadian Architect, 12, no. 2, February 1967, pp. 35-36; "Bonaventure Subway Station, Montreal", The Canadian Architect, 12, no. 8, August 1967, pp. 45-48.
39. Guy R. Legault, "Le Métro de Montréal", Architecture Canada, 43, no. 8, août 1966, pp. 44-48; Blumenfeld, op. cit., pp. 147-154.
40. Henry-Russel Hitchcock, Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, pp. 230-231 (#).

41. John William Reys, The Making of Urban America..., pp. 497-525.
42. Ste-Hélène Island, originally covering 135 acres, was joined to Green Island up-stream and to Rond Island, downstream, adding 50 and 145' acres respectively to the site. A part of the Expo was also built on Pointe St-Charles, on McKay pier; area: 150 acres. Finally, Notre Dame Island, reclaimed from the river, adds another 310 acres to the site.
43. S.M. Staples, "Transportation Network at Expo 67", Architecture Canada, 43, no. 8, August 1966, pp. 33-34; Id., "Expo '67: Is It a Success?", Architecture Canada, 44, no. 8, August 1967, pp. 39-42.
44. Staples, "Expo '67: Is It a Success?", p. 40.
45. Édouard Fiset, "Introduction d'un concept urbain dans la planification de l'exposition", JRAIC, 42, no. 5, May 1965, pp. 55-62; Jerry Miller, "Expo '67: a Search for Order", The Canadian Architect, 12, no. 5, May 1967, pp. 44-54; Laurent Lamy, "Le design, roi et maître de l'Exposition universelle", Vie des Arts, no. 48, Automne 1967, pp. 52-55.
46. Guy Desbarats, op. cit.; Guntis Plesums, "Architecture and Structure as a System: Man the Producer Pavillon", Architecture Canada, 46, no. 4, April 1969, pp. 23-33.
47. Peter Blake, "Quebec's Shimmering Vitrine", The Architectural Forum, 126, no. 5, June 1967, pp. 29-37.
48. Ibid., p. 36.

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